

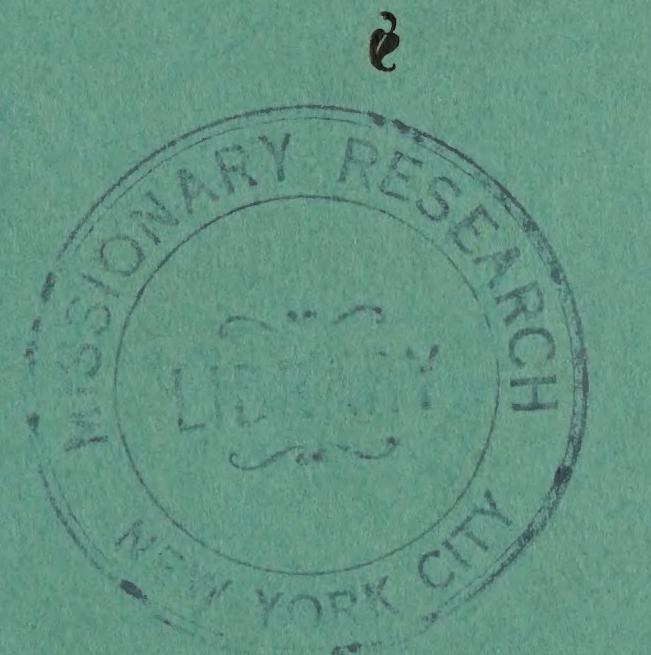
Pam  
Misc.

# The Christian Basis of a New Society

---

A STUDY OUTLINE

Comp. by Rose Terlin



World's Young Women's Christian Association



# The Christian Basis of a New Society

---

## A STUDY OUTLINE

This outline is based on the contributions of an international group of correspondents, and also on official oecumenical documents. It has been compiled by Rose Terlin, rapporteur of the World's Y.W.C.A. Study on The Christian Basis of a New Society

World's Young Women's Christian Association

### HEADQUARTERS

37 Quai Wilson  
Geneva, Switzerland

### TEMPORARY OFFICE

1155 Sixteenth Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C., U. S. A.

Printed in U.S.A.

1942



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I	
AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER .....	5
CHAPTER II	
SOME BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.....	8
CHAPTER III	
THE CHRISTIAN BASIS IN RELATION TO POLITICAL ORGANIZATION .....	34
CHAPTER IV	
THE CHRISTIAN BASIS IN RELATION TO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS..	53
CHAPTER V	
THE CHRISTIAN BASIS IN RELATION TO WORLD ORGANIZATION	64
SUGGESTED READINGS .....	78



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2020 with funding from  
Columbia University Libraries

<https://archive.org/details/christianbasisof00worf>

## CHAPTER I

# An Introductory Chapter

“**F**AITH is not something we believe in spite of the evidence; it is something we dare in spite of the consequences.” It is in this meaning of the word *faith* that Christianity speaks today to the broken hearts and bewildered minds of the people of every continent, challenging them to resist the forces which would destroy the decency and dignity of men, inspiring them to struggle for a new order in which justice shall make possible that peace which the peoples of the earth so desperately seek.

The conflagration of the war now raging throughout the world is destroying not only nations, but political and economic relations and social institutions which have stood in many nations for centuries. The war has confronted the people of every nation with very fundamental questions. How should human beings be regarded and treated? What should human relations be like? How should the resources of the earth be used? What should be the basis of relations between nations? In the light of such issues Christians are forced to re-examine the fundamental faith by which men and nations can truly live. It forces us to search the Christian Revelation to find the cornerstones on which alone the life of nations can be rebuilt with any measure of security for the future.

There are those to whom the exploring of Christian insights concerning the nature of man may seem a far cry from the pressing and terrifying decisions of the hour. Yet since the revolution of this century is a spiritual as well as a political and an economic one, the dynamic on which the future is built must spring from a living faith that is worth the struggling, the dying and the suffering which tear the nations today. Can the Christian faith give men a realistic basis on which community life must be organized? It is safe to say that if Christians cannot give the leadership this crisis demands—cannot challenge men and women in terms that speak to their condition—then the future is in the hands of others. It is not often that God confronts his people with such decisive opportunity!

As Christians we must examine both the basis of our faith as it

relates to the issues of our time, and the political, economic and social realities out of which a new society will grow. It is by no means certain that the new order for which men struggle will be "a day of light and not darkness". The need of people everywhere for a faith which is adequate to the life and death issues they face, is all too apparent. The call to Christians to give leadership to the bewildered and suffering family which is the human race, to speak to the conditions of men everywhere, to proclaim the righteousness on which alone the life of nations depends is clear and decisive. The guidance which the doctrines of the Christian faith give for the common life is peculiarly relevant to the very problems that are most critical in our times.

There are many proposals for the new order emanating from governments, from unofficial groups of experts and from Christian groups in those nations where such thinking and planning are still possible. This study outline is different from such proposals in that the issues with which it deals were *internationally initiated*. In June 1941 the Executive Committee of the World's Y.W.C.A. voted to promote a study of the Christian Basis of a New Society. The plan was to have various Y.W.C.A. leaders, as well as other leaders of Christian thought, in as many countries as possible write their convictions on this subject to the World's Y.W.C.A. office in Washington, where the material would be summarized and relayed to the various correspondents. In spite of slow communications and the spread of war to vast new sections of the world, in the one year since the study began, word has come from correspondents on every continent and from 24 nations.

*The issues discussed in this study are those raised by our correspondents.* Every issue here is vital to the thinking of some group of Christians. Some of the points discussed may seem remote or even a little irrelevant to our members in any one nation. But that is precisely what would occur if we could have a World's Y.W.C.A. conference with representatives from all these countries meeting together. The World Christian Community is not easy to achieve. It is real and potent at the point where we honestly and frankly face together our differences in thinking and in emphases and then find that "unity in diversity" which can only come from our common commitment to the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

There are some references in this study which give it a focus, at

certain points, in terms of the United Nations. Inasmuch as the victory of fascism would, judging from the plans already published by the Axis, preclude any possibility of a "new order" based on Christian principles, and inasmuch as our study must be rooted, so far as possible, in the concrete choices facing Christians in this historic situation, such references are necessary to give reality to this study. We are, however, a World's Y.W.C.A. with members in Italy, Germany and Japan, as well as in capitulated and conquered countries. These members must be silent in an international study of the issues raised in this outline. It is possible for an inclusive international Christian organization to publish such a study without breaking faith with our members in the Axis countries *only if* it is focused on the Christian basis. The constant question which is fundamental to this whole study is: *What are the Christian principles on which the life of nations and the relations between nations must be organized in the spiritual, social, political and economic realm—if peace and justice are to prevail?* This is a question which is real to our members in every nation under every condition. It may be that these are principles which Christians will have to take "into the catacombs", but we must proclaim them to the nations while the "new order" is yet in the making.

As groups of Y.W.C.A. members in various countries take part in this study it is essential to keep in mind the thousands of our fellow members in other countries who cannot participate in this study. We must never lose sight of the fact that they are passing through experiences and making life and death decisions about which many of us who can participate in this study do not and cannot know. Their attitude toward these questions when we can meet again as a full World's Y.W.C.A. may be quite different from ours. But it is the hope of the World's Y.W.C.A. that by facing these questions while we are still able to do so, we may help to lay a foundation for common thought and action which will help contribute to effective Christian witness by word and action in a world exhausted and devastated by war.

Finally, we must keep always in mind the fact that while this study deals with Christian *ethics*, with the relations between human beings which are right in the sight of a just, yet merciful God, these have meaning only in terms of the total Christian message.

## CHAPTER II

# Some Basic Elements of the Christian Faith

“WE do not take up our task as bewildered citizens of our several nations, asking if anywhere there is a clue to our problems; we take it up as Christians, to whom is committed ‘the word of reconciliation’, that ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.’”<sup>1</sup> As Christians we have two-fold responsibility—to bear witness to our faith in whatever setting we find ourselves, and to test all human relations, social institutions and political structures in the searching light of our understanding of God’s will.

The cornerstone on which we erect the foundations for the future is neither political nor ethical. It is the living faith of the Christian Gospel—a faith in the God revealed in Jesus Christ, and a response to His desire for the life of man. It is consequently a faith which speaks to the condition of man himself, a faith which defines right human relationships, and the right relationship between man and the material resources of God’s earth. It is essential, therefore, that we re-examine those basic elements of the Christian faith which have a direct bearing on the problems of man in society.

### THE NATURE OF MAN

The biblical view of human nature presents us with a dialectic, a paradox, which, because it is that, is truer to human nature than any neat, rationalistic description of man.

The Christian view of man may be summarized by three quotations from the Psalms, each of which contains an essential insight concerning man. They must be *taken together* to state the Christian view.

1. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

---

<sup>1</sup> Message from the World Conference on Church, Community and State, Oxford, 1937.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: Psalm 8:4-6.

2. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable work, there is none that doeth good.

The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Psalm 14:1-3.

3. Whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into the heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell behold thou art there.

Search me, Oh God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts:

And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:7-8; 23-24.

Throughout Christian history, different groups within the Church have tended to put their main emphasis on one or other of the first two elements stated above. There are those who have stressed the view that man is a sinner, so unregenerate that no good can be done by man of himself. This view has denied the essential decency and aspiration to be and to do better, the "humble and courageous goodness" of the ordinary run of human beings. It has made for social conservatism, because it believed that no man could make any genuine progress until he had accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour. Thus the adherents of this view were pessimistic about all movements for human welfare as such. There are groups which have stressed the first element—the fact that man is a "little lower than the angels", a creature of infinite worth and dignity and made in the image of God. This group tended to be over-optimistic about the progress which man-as-he-is could make. It tended to be unrealistic because it missed the egotism, the will-to-power, the self-centered motivations which lay behind the actions of men who pursue their own will.

Unless these three elements of the Christian view about the nature of man are *held together* in a true tension, one or the other becomes exaggerated and the total Christian position becomes dis-

torted, often with dire results for the influence of the Christian forces on the social order.

#### a. MAN AS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

The Christian Gospel thus affirms the limitless dignity, worth and potentialities of man—the crown of God's creation. Its revelation is that God not only created man, but that he chose man as the vehicle of His will. The purpose and destiny of man is to show forth by the very nature of his life, the glory and wisdom and power of "the God who is the creator of human life". This aspect of the nature of man is clearly set forth in Professor John Bennett's recent book "Christian Realism":

Man's nature contains impulses of generosity and self-giving which sin does not normally destroy. But above all, man is made for the highest and unless his nature is deadened it cannot find satisfaction except in the highest. As Kierkegaard says over and over again, men can will the good with a single mind but they cannot will the evil with a single mind—at least not without self-deception. As Berdyaev says "The greatest mystery of life is that satisfaction is felt not by those who take and make demands but by those who give and make sacrifices." . . . Divine grace is available, it is not limited to the approved ecclesiastical channels nor to an elect minority, it is effective as an influence making for growth, inspiration and healing, even when it is not recognized as grace at all.

Man's life knows its highest fulfillment only when he loves and serves in humble obedience the God, who alone is worthy of the total devotion of heart, soul, mind and strength. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

The answer to the problem of human freedom and responsibility is inherent in this Christian doctrine. Man becomes free when he assumes full responsibility before God, when he turns back to God, acknowledging Him only as Lord, thus becoming the servant of the Divine Will, rather than seeking mastery of his own destiny. The search for an autonomous, anarchic freedom ends invariably in deeper and more terrible bondage.

Since man is the child of God, the crown of creation—given "dominion" over all other creation—God is mocked and blasphemed when human life is debased and exploited, when material gain is put before basic human needs, when man's dignity is destroyed, when one human being lives at the expense of another, for then the very purposes of His Creation are set at nought.

## b. MAN AS SINNER

While the nature of man is thus a highly holy thing, man has consistently violated his nature, disavowing that he is a creature of God. This turning away of man from the desire of God to the pursuit of "the devices and desires of his own heart", to the deifying of himself, his race, his nation, and his class, has wrought disaster, suffering and destruction throughout history. Sin consists in one thing only—the turning away from God, the setting up of the false autonomy of the self, the disobedience to the Divine Will. Whenever God is de-throned, the false gods are enthroned and the purpose of human life is frustrated and negated. Man can be the instrument of the demonic as well as of the divine. Even a specific good, such as the nation, may become the instrument of diabolical forces if it is served and pursued as relentlessly and exclusively as if it were God.

## c. GOD'S SEARCH FOR MAN AND MAN'S RESPONSE

Yet God does not abandon man. While the consequences of sin may not be escaped, the spirit of God yearns over man, calling him back to righteousness and life, to the abandonment of sin and death. "God works in history and in man, speaks to him and in him, saves and regenerates him, communes with him and dwells in him, through the Holy Spirit, invites him to a life of fellowship with him".<sup>2</sup> In spite of self-seeking (sin), weakness and inertia, man is driven by a tension within himself to be something better than he is.

Christian teaching defines man in terms of a contradiction between man as he *actually* is and man as *he is intended to be*. Brunner says that "man is the contradiction between Creation and Sin. This is not something *in* man; it *is* man. Man stands between his creation in the image of God, the original union with God, and sin, the false independence of man".<sup>3</sup> It is on this basis that the Christian message of the redeeming work of Christ has validity.

The Christian "good news" about man is therefore neither a foolish optimism, doomed to frustration and defeat because it believes that man as he is can set the world right by fixing up this or that system, removing or imposing this or that restraint, nor is

---

<sup>2</sup> Kraemer, "The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World," p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Emil Brunner, "Man in Revolt", p. 332. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

it an uncreative pessimism which sees man so unredeemedly evil that all efforts to dignify human life are doomed.<sup>4</sup> It is a dynamic, challenging call to men to see the wonders which God has wrought in human personality and in society when men have turned to God and lived in the light of His revelation. It is thus a call to men to return to their true nature as children of the One Holy Eternal God. The God revealed in Jesus Christ eternally confronts men with the choice of life or death. They can pursue the way of sin and self-will to their death, destruction and bondage, or turn back to God their Creator and Father and find life, growth and freedom. There are only two ways.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### THE NATURE OF MAN

#### a. MAN AS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

1. What implications for the social problems we face today has the Christian conviction that man was created in the image of God? How inclusive is this teaching? What guidance does this teaching offer for our problems in the field of race relations; of class relations; of relations between nations? What implications has this Christian conviction for the personal problems we face today?
2. How does this Christian concept of man (and hence of social attitudes and policy) differ from the concept of those who believe that man has no inherent dignity and worth or who consider the masses of men as "dumb cattle" to be enslaved, ruled and driven?
3. The Psalms speak of the dominion of man over things. Jesus says that "the Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath." What guidance does this teaching give for the right relation between men and social institutions, for example, man and the state, the relation of human need to property rights, etc.? Do the institutions in your community exist to serve all human beings in the community or do men exist to serve the institutions? What about the relation of man and the machine in industrial society? .
4. Do the Christian people of your community really act as if they believed that *all* human beings were created by God in His image? What social practices in your community inherently regard

---

<sup>4</sup> The statement of the Oxford Conference on this point bears study and discussion.

some human beings as means to an end? What changes in race relations would result if Christians were to act on this conviction?

5. Would Christian action based on this teaching be *directed toward* creating the kind of society in which the growth of human beings is not warped by economic, political, social and racial practices beyond the control of the individual? If so, what would this entail in relation to your own nation and community? If not, how would you state the goal of Christian action? What implications does your statement have for your nation and community?

6. What part has this teaching about man played in the social progress which has been made in history?

b. MAN AS SINNER

1. How do modern social theories which regard our problems as due to ignorance (not enough education or the right kind of education), faulty conditioning in childhood, inadequate social institutions, etc., differ from the Christian concept of man? What is the relation of ignorance, faulty conditioning, etc. to sin?

2. In what sense does the Christian believe in progress? Does he believe that there is "a progressive increase of good over evil", that "men are better now than they were 200 years ago", that "human nature is perfectible if carefully and correctly nurtured",—or that what?

3. How can Christians believe *both* that man is inherently good and made in the very image of God, and that man is sinful? Does this make us more realistic or does it paralyze us for effective action?

4. What particular forms of man's disobedience to God, and denial of God are most evident today? What gods are men most obviously serving?

5. What connection is there between this Christian conviction about man and the personal problems which human beings face? To what extent does modern psychology validate this Christian view of man?

c. GOD'S SEARCH FOR MAN AND MAN'S RESPONSE

1. What are the grounds for the Christian belief that God cares about man and seeks to redeem him? What is man's part?

2. How do you define repentance? What part does it play in man's response to God's call?

3. What "fruits worthy of repentance" are Christians called upon to exhibit today in relation to their part in the creating of a new society?

4. To what extent do social conditions have an effect on the possibilities of man's response to God's call?

5. Based on your observation and experience, in what ways is man's response to God's call affected by the action of Christians in relation to problems of social justice? Are Christians ever a hindrance to this response? How does this particularly affect the attitude of a) youth; b) non-white races, toward the Church?

6. What do people mean when they say, "Human nature cannot be changed"? Does a Christian believe this?

## MAN AND HIS NEIGHBOR

The realism of the Christian Gospel is perhaps most strikingly evident in the fact that it does not leave man as an isolated abstraction. It is part of the nature of man that he is a *social being* and therefore the message of the Christian Gospel deals with right human relations as a fundamental part of the nature of man. One wonders if there has ever been a time in history when mankind has paid a more terrible price for wrong human relations. The present tragic situation is a vindication of the Christian Gospel about man. Millions of people have been treated as creatures to be ruled and driven, as "hands" to the machines, as sub-human, if they belonged to a race other than the dominant one. The destruction of true community, the lonely isolation of man from his fellows, the turning of material things which are instruments into ends-in-themselves, are taking a terrible toll today. Any message from Christian groups concerning the new society for which we pray and strive, must speak to the fundamental question of the *right relations* which must obtain between human beings in society, if it is to endure. It must have something to say to those who are striving to be the masters of men—whether political dictators, industrial oligarchs, or "superior" races—and it must speak to the conditions of those whose enslavement, real or subtly concealed, is nevertheless a *fact* in the eyes of God.

We recognize that there are basic differences in the interpretations held by Christians as to the theological grounds of Christian ethics. But we do have a common basis of Christian doctrine which

is so fundamental, far-reaching and relevant in its view of the nature of man and society, that we do not need to be paralyzed by these differences.

The statement adopted by the Oxford Conference defined the basis of the Christian ethic in these words:

This love of neighbor is an obligation which partly rests upon the native worth and dignity of man as made in the image of God. In all systems of morality this obligation is to a greater or less degree recognized. Christianity, however, recognized that the image of God in man is so defaced by sin that man's native worth and dignity is largely obscured. For this reason it must be emphasized that our obligation to the neighbor springs not so much from our recognition of man's native dignity as from the Christian revelation of God's purpose to restore that dignity through the redemption that is in Christ. The obligation is therefore a duty towards God and continues to be operative even when the neighbor does not obviously demand or deserve respect. We must love our fellow-men because God loves them and wills to redeem them.

The Christian doctrine of human relations, if one may call it so, may be simply and briefly stated, although its consequences are complicated and far-reaching. The command to "love thy neighbor as thyself" seems to have these implications in the Gospel:

1. *The religious character of social relations.* The individual's true worship of God is inseparable from his relation to his fellow-men. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift". Matthew 5:23-24. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen"? I John 4:20.

2. *The all-inclusiveness of the Christian doctrine of human relations.* All human beings, irrespective of man-made barriers of race, creed, class and nation are to be regarded as neighbors. "Be ye therefore all-inclusive, even as your heavenly Father includes all". Matthew 5:48 (Torrey translation).

3. *Man must act towards his neighbors with love*—as if he were tied to them by the intimate tie of brother to brother—treat them as he himself would be treated. The imperative to deal equally with all men, the striving to achieve an equal concern for their fate as for the fate of one's own family, a catholicity of behavior toward all

people, is thus enjoined on those who would worship God and serve Him. (The story of the Good Samaritan)

"The motivation in the Christian ethic points always to God and His will. Love, for God loves. Be righteous, for God is righteous. There is no word about confidence or diffidence in man, as the motive for an ethical injunction. . . . Our fellow-man as such has infinite value because he is God's creature, and he is to be loved because of this fact and because it is God's will. Therefore the love of enemies and of the most disgusting and helpless of men is, in the sphere of this radically theo-centric ethic, as natural as the shining of the sun".<sup>5</sup>

4. *The claims of justice in social relations.* Christians have "interpreted the love of God as an easy-going amiability rather than as holy love inexorably demanding righteousness because in this our welfare truly consists, so that the divine justice is an expression of divine love. Indeed it is true and vitally important that not only between God and man, but also between man and man, justice is the primary expression of love. Love is more than justice; but this does not mean that it disregards justice. It completes justice as the Gospel completes or fulfills the law. But the law must be established before the Gospel can have its true effect, and love itself must establish justice before it goes on to its distinctive activities".<sup>6</sup>

"Christianity becomes socially futile if it does not recognize that love must will justice, and that the Christian is under an obligation to secure the best possible social and economic structure, insofar as such structure is determined by human decisions".<sup>7</sup>

The Bible reveals God as the eternal protagonist in history, "moving the spoiled (exploited) against the strong", lifting up men to be the champions of justice and to speak His word of condemnation and destruction on societies which live by injustice and the worship of mammon. "Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and righteousness? then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Was not this to know me? saith Jehovah". Jeremiah 22:15-16

---

<sup>5</sup> Kraemer, "The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World". pp. 88-89.

<sup>6</sup> Basis of a Just Peace—address broadcast by the Archbishop of Canterbury (then of York), reprinted in *The Listener* (published by the British Broadcasting Corporation), 15 January 1942.

<sup>7</sup> World Conference on Church, Community and State, Report of Section III, Oxford, 1937.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### MAN AND HIS NEIGHBOR

1. In what sense is man inherently a social being? In what sense must the problem of human relations be considered a part of the nature of man?

2. What difference is there between an ethic based on an affirmation about *man* ("Because all men are children of one Father, therefore . . .") and an ethic based on an affirmation about *God* ("Because God created all men, loves them and redeems them therefore . . .")?

3. Discuss the different positions held by Christians on the theological basis of the Christian ethic:

a. Some Christians would phrase the ground for ethical behavior in terms which emphasize that since God is the Creator and Father of all men, all men are, therefore, brothers. The emphasis here is on the *universal brotherhood of man*.

b. Others would stress the fact that Christ died to redeem all men, to restore them to their true character as sons of God and as brothers. The emphasis here is on the *redemption in Christ*. Christian ethical behavior is, in this view, a witness to the new dispensation in Christ—a demonstration that a new relationship between God and man, and man and his neighbor was initiated by Jesus Christ.

c. Still others would say that because of the sinful character of man, any talk of a universal brotherhood of man is meaningless. Men are only potentially brothers. They do not enter into their true relationship as brothers until they have accepted their redemption in Christ. Those who hold this view would say, however, that "God has instituted 'orders' in this fallen world (e.g. the state, the family, etc.) to prevent it from falling into complete chaos, and these orders form the abiding framework of ethical action".

What strengths and what dangers do you see in each of these positions? Would there be different behavior under one concept from under another?

4. What significance do you attach to the fact that in the story about the gift at the altar, the emphasis is on "if thy brother hath aught against thee"? What social implications has this for Christians, and how does it differ from: "If thou hast aught against thy

brother"? What implications has this for Christian attitude and action toward the underprivileged, the labor movement, the negro, the oriental?

5. The inclusiveness of the Christian ethic challenges our racial practices, both in the Church and in many nations and in the community. How would you formulate a policy for inter-racial relations and practices based on this Christian teaching?

6. The World Conference on Church, Community and State, Oxford, 1937, in its message to the Churches said: "The existence of economic classes presents a barrier to human fellowship which cannot be tolerated by the Christian conscience". How is this different from saying that the barrier between the classes must be bridged? What implications has this statement for us as we discuss a new society? How can a classless society be achieved?

7. If love is the commitment of life to God and the resultant necessity to deal equally with all people, what accepted practices of life in your community would be challenged?

8. Do you agree with those statements of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Oxford Conference concerning the relation of love and justice? If so, what implications have they for Christian social attitudes and action? If not, how would you phrase this relationship? What are the implications of *your* phrasing for Christian social attitudes and action?

9. The Oxford Conference report says:

The relation of the commandment of love to the justice of political and economic systems is twofold. It is an ideal which reaches beyond any possible achievements in the field of political relations, but it is nevertheless also a standard by which various schemes of justice may be judged. In attempting to deal with political and economic problems, the Christian must therefore be especially on his guard against two errors.

The one is to regard the realities of social justice incorporated in given systems and orders as so inferior to the law of love that the latter cannot be a principle of discrimination among them but only a principle of indiscriminate judgment upon them all. This error makes Christianity futile as a guide in all those decisions which Christians, like other people, must constantly be making in the political and economic sphere. Practically, it gives the advantage to established systems as against the challenge of new social adventures and experiments; for it tempts Christians to make no decisions at all, and such efforts to reserve decisions become in practice decisions in favor of the status quo.

The other error is to identify some particular social system with the will of God or to equate it with the Kingdom of God. When conservatives insist on such an identification in favor of the status quo, they

impart to it a dangerous religious sanction which must drive those who challenge it into a secular revolt against religion itself. If, on the other hand, this identification is made in the interests of a new social order, it will lead to the same complacency which the critic deprecates in the old social situation. . . . Both errors are essentially heretical from the point of view of Christian faith. The one denies the reality of the Kingdom of God in history; the other equates the Kingdom of God with the processes of history. In one case the ultimate and eternal destiny of human existence, which transcends history, is made to support an attitude of indifference toward historical social issues; in the other case, the eternal destiny of human existence is denied or obscured.

Discuss these errors. Which tendency is more evident among Christians in your nation and community? How can Christians act creatively in the revolutionary social situation of our day and avoid these difficulties?

10. Would maintaining the Christian dialectic about the nature of man (created in the image of God and yet sinful) help to avoid these pitfalls to which we are prone? How would you maintain such a dialectic and at the same time keep the edge of prophetic action sharp?

11. If the relation between love and justice had been more clearly discerned and acted on by Christians during the development of our modern industrial era, what differences would have characterized the rôle of the Church in relation to social problems?

12. What special problems face the Christian today, since it is impossible for him to equate any given social system with the Kingdom of God? Discuss this in relation both to democracy and totalitarianism. How can defeatism be avoided? What is the dynamic of Christian action?

13. The prophets emphasize the fact that there is no peace or prosperity for the nation and no acceptable worship of a righteous God, unless justice is done. Since those who benefit from a lack of justice have not in history yielded of their own volition sufficiently to change the basis of relationship between those who have power and those who suffer injustice, will the achievement of justice in society depend upon the ability to meet power with power? What dangers and what opportunities does this imply for Christian action?

## THE RESOURCES OF THE EARTH

Just as the Christian basis for human relations rests exclusively in the fact of God's creation and redemption of human life, so the Christian basis for our attitude toward possessions rests also in the

fact that "the earth and the fullness thereof" are the Lord's. Christian ethics are as "radically theo-centric" with regard to property relations as they are to human relations. That is to say, the ethic is derived from our faith that *God created the earth and its fruits for the benefit of the whole human race*. "So God formed man in his own likeness, in the likeness of God he formed him, male and female he formed both. And God blessed them. God . . . also said, 'See, I give you every plant that bears seed all over the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; be that your food. To every wild beast on earth, to every bird of the air, and to every living creature . . . I give all the green growth for food'." Genesis 1:27-30 (Moffatt). God gave the resources of the earth to man to be used in stewardship to raise the level of life for all mankind. There is no place in the Christian faith for an other-worldly "spiritual" emphasis which decries concern with material things. In the Christian Gospel, the *material world as well as man's being belong to God and must be used according to His laws or destruction results*.

It is striking to note in the Old Testament how often when the prophets called the people back from the service of false gods to the worship of the one true God, this call was made specific in terms of their stewardship of the resources of the earth. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place [for others], that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth". Isaiah 5:8. "The profit of the earth is for all". Ecclesiastes 5:9. In biblical days wealth was primarily agricultural. If we apply the judgment of the Bible with regard to crops and land to mineral resources, industrial commodities, and the machine itself, the far-reaching implications of the Christian Gospel for our economic life are apparent. Poverty in the midst of plenty cannot be regarded by Christians merely as an "economic maladjustment", but as a profound ethical issue demanding bold and fearless judgment and action.

Comfortable Christians are often inclined to deplore what they choose to call the materialism of those who demand a decent standard of living through increased wages and better working conditions. The striking fact about the Hebrew-Christian faith, in contrast with other religions is precisely its materialism in contrast with the purely other-worldly brand of spiritualism. There can be no separation of material and spiritual concerns in the Christian faith. The morality

it envisages is an inclusive one—inclusive of every aspect of life. God will not deal with a fragment of any human being. The whole person—his business practices and political views as well as his private life—must stand before the righteousness that is God.

When man's religious consciousness developed from primitive concepts of gods to be placated by sacrifice, to a concept in which the nation was seen as dwelling under the rule of a single God who was good, the idea that the riches of the earth were given to *all* men was stated and acted upon by the Jewish community. Every fifty years was the "Jubilee Year", "when the original equal division of land was restored and slaves freed".<sup>8</sup> It is a shock to realize, on reading history, that a higher level of social morality existed in the Hebrew community of the tenth century B.C., in relation to their economic possibilities, than exists in the Christian nations of the world today!

The early church fathers took the implication of the doctrine of stewardship very seriously. Clement of Alexandria wrote: "God has given us the use of goods, and He has determined that use should be in common. It is absurd and disgraceful for one to live luxuriously and magnificently when so many are hungry". Tertullian goes further and accuses all who would hinder the equal distribution of goods of being "murderers". St. Ambrose was very strong in his statement: "How far, oh rich, do you extend your senseless avarice? Do you intend to be the sole inhabitants of the earth? Why do you drive out your fellow-sharers of nature and claim it for yourselves? The earth was made for all, the rich and the poor in common. Why do you rich claim it is your sole right? Nature gave all things for the use of all. The earth is the Lord's and we are his offspring".

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### THE RESOURCES OF THE EARTH

1. On what elements in the Christian faith do Christian groups speak and act with respect to the economic order? Why do you believe (or not believe) that these controversial problems should be a concern of the Church, and of Christian groups like the Y.W.C.A.?
2. What light does the Christian concept, which regards the

---

<sup>8</sup> For discussion of this see Chapter V, Conrad Noel, "The Life of Jesus", Dent and Sons.

resources of the earth as gifts of God to the whole human race, throw upon:

- a. the cause of the present world struggle, and
- b. the appropriate basis of economic relations in a new society?

In the Christian view what should be the purpose of economic activity (i.e. producing and distributing goods and services)? How would this apply to agriculture and industry?

3. The application of science to the development of the resources of the earth has made the abolition of poverty potentially possible. Are scientific discoveries to be treated as a social product or an individual achievement? How can the fruits of the earth be restored to the purpose for which they were created? What changes are necessary if scientific advance and the resources of the earth are to be used in the service of society? Should they be used for the financial gain of individuals or corporations or for raising the standard of life for all people, or how should they be used?

4. What should be the Christian attitude toward property rights, in the light of Christian teaching concerning the nature of man and that concerning the right use of the resources of the earth? (See the Oxford Conference Report for discussion of the question of property rights.)

5. What changes in property relations have been caused by the development of industrialization? What consequences has this had for the relations between classes, between farmers and industrial workers, between industrial nations and agricultural nations?

6. In what ways is the present economic system, by which economic resources are or are not related to human need in your country, an obstacle to living the Christian life?

7. What guidance does the doctrine of stewardship of all the earth's resources for the benefit of all give us as we think about a new pattern of *international* economic relations, e.g., access to raw materials, the exchange of goods including agricultural commodities, the question of colonies, etc.?

## EQUALITY

The discussion of the nature of man in Christian doctrine, especially as it applies to right human relationships, raises two problems of great importance in considering the Christian basis for a new

society. These are: the problem of EQUALITY and the problem of COMMUNITY.

A decade ago we would probably have regarded the discussion of the Christian attitude toward the question of human equality as a speculative exercise. Today when we are confronted by philosophies of enslavement, by systems of philosophy and government erected on a hierarchical foundation resting on what is boldly called "the divine inequality of man", Christians are challenged to express their faith clearly in relation to this problem.

This is an extremely difficult question to discuss because we are caught in a dilemma between, on the one hand, a perfectionism unrelated to concrete facts, problems and decisions, and on the other hand, a "realism" which too quickly becomes an endorsement of existing inequalities, paralyzing the will to remove these inequalities. It is to be constantly remembered that what we are doing here is to examine the basic Christian convictions, the "ought" which flows from our faith that God is the Creator and Father of the human race. We recognize that in the concrete choices to be made in any given situation, the best we can usually accomplish is an exceedingly poor approximation. It is necessary to stress this in connection with discussions of equality because there is perhaps no area in which we are more readily accused of "offering as guides to action what are really only counsels of perfection". On the other hand, we also tend in this area to rationalize our compromises declaring them to be God's will.

There are two main streams of Christian thought on the question of equality. These are the product of Christian history which has assimilated various schools of thought, as it has wrestled with the eternal problem of the relation of the Kingdom of God to history. There are many variations and mutations of these two basic views, which will not be analyzed here, since they are incidental to the main purpose of this discussion outline. These two views are:

A. Many theologians, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, hold that ideas of equality, and of a society based on equality are perversions of Christian doctrine. They hold that "the theory of equality is contrary to the biblical idea of creation". "Faith in the Divine Order of Creation controverts all attempts to make the whole of mankind 'equal'. The egalitarian law of nature does not belong to the world of the Bible, but to the context of stoic rational-

ism".<sup>9</sup> These theologians point to the fact that "the orders of creation" are themselves a hierarchy, that the relation of God and man are as Lord and servant, that man was given "dominion" over the lesser creatures. Also men differ widely in their natural endowment as to spiritual, intellectual and physical gifts. All these are seen to argue against an egalitarian concept of human relations. Paul, for this reason, urged servants to be beholden to their masters, wives to their husbands, citizens to their rulers, for the Divine Will appointed these hierarchical relationships. They are the basis of order in social relations. Each man has a function to perform in the whole, and these functions are not equal in value nor do they make for equal needs.

Jacques Maritain, a leading Roman Catholic philosopher, rejecting both the empiricist notion of equality which leads to enslavement, and the modern philosophy of egalitarianism which characterized the eighteenth century "enlightenment", as being un-Christian, affirms a "realist" theory of equality. This philosophy, he says, does not seek to suppress the inequalities between human beings, the differences in gifts and talents, but seeks to base them on a more fundamental equality—the *unity* of mankind in nature. By virtue of justice these differences are allowed free play to develop naturally, and are converted to "the use and fruition of the common good". Maritain calls this the "true Christian concept of equality", and calls it "an equality of proportion":

It is because the Christian conception of life is based upon so concrete, broad and fruitful a certainty of the equality and community in nature between men, that it, at the same time, insists so forcefully on the orderings and hierarchies which spring and should spring from the very heart of this essential community, and on the particular inequalities which they necessarily involve. For in the world of man as in the world of creation, there can be no concourse of communication, no life or movement without differentiation, no differentiation without inequalities.

Certain social inequalities result from natural inequalities or are required by them. It is just that that part which by innate or acquired superiority renders more services to the whole should receive more in return. It is also just or equitable that individuals should receive in proportion not to their needs or desires, which tend to become infinite, but to the necessities of their life and development, the means for putting to use their natural gifts. In this sense the more a man has, the more he should receive.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Emil Brunner, "The Divine Imperative", p. 407. Macmillan & Co.

<sup>10</sup> Jacques Maritain, "Ransoming the Time", pp. 20 and 24. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

This same view is inherent in the famous Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on the Conditions of Labor:

Just as the symmetry of the human body is the result of the disposition of the members of the body, so in a state it is ordained by nature that these two classes [rich and poor] should exist in harmony and agreement and should fit into one another so as to maintain the equilibrium of the body politic.

B. The other stream of Christian thought takes sharp issue with the view that equality in human relations is not a Christian ideal. This view holds that because all men were created as children of God, because they share the same fundamental nature and because all men stand before God equal in their need of forgiveness, all men must therefore be dealt with as equals. The Bible repeatedly affirms the fact that the hope of man is that "the ways of the Lord are equal", that God deals equally with men. "Masters give unto your servants what is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven". It is out of their blindness and sin rather than their insight and salvation that men cry to God for special treatment. Because God is no respecter of persons, because the hierarchies and special privileges, the gradations of race and class by which men set value, are of no account in His eyes, so men must deal equally with each other. As they are commanded to love because God loves, so they must seek to secure the kind of social organization in which men are better enabled to deal equally with each other—since God so deals with men.

The command to love our neighbors as ourselves, lays upon us the obligation to strive for equality. If love is to be more than sentimentality, if it is to have substance in reality, if the "word" is to be clothed with the flesh of action, then equal dealing with all human beings and equal concern for the fate of all human beings are an inescapable obligation of the Christian life and the natural expression of the Christian ethic. Man in his egotism and pride, in his desire for prestige and power, "must always be superior to somebody". The man-made divisions of race, class, nation, and even creed, by which one group seeks to dominate and exploit another, are part of man's denial that he is a creature of God; they are part of his disobedience and sin, not an expression of the natural order of differences. In this view, the differences in the natural endowment of given individuals are as nothing before the tremendous fact

of the unity and equality of all human beings in the eyes of God. Paul's emphasis on the fact that "ye are all one in Christ, neither male nor female, Jew nor Gentile, master nor slave" is a call to witness to this fact revealed by our redemption in Christ.

It is important for us to face these differences among Christians on an issue of such vital importance in our times. These views do not necessarily represent an irreconcilable conflict in attitude among Christians. It is likely that our views will be conditioned by the background of our different churches, for our churches reflect the divisions of Christian judgment on this issue. After we understand the problem itself, however, it is essential for both the theologian and the layman to find that common ground from which we can as Christians proclaim and witness in a world where philosophies, which debase men and destroy human dignity, and make inequality a religion, are struggling for mastery.

Here we have a common message and a revolutionary one. Professor Brunner, who is an exponent of the first position set forth above, states a position which would be warmly supported by the adherents of the second when he says:

This [the inequality in the Divine Order of Creation] does not mean I have any intention of justifying the inequality which may exist at any particular time by the idea of the Divine Order of Creation; for this inequality is always and to a very large extent also tainted by sin. The actual inequality which may exist at any particular time is always mainly due to some selfish exploitation of advantage, to the brutal determination of masterful, unscrupulous people to exploit to the utmost those who are weaker and more scrupulous. Only "romantic idealists" would venture to maintain that the actual economic order is an "organism" in which "one member helps another". The actual economic world is the scene of a most brutal struggle for power. . . . Thus, although we are convinced that the theory of equality is contrary to the biblical idea of Creation, we are also convinced that *this* kind of inequality is still more contrary to it. . . .

A very significant statement is that which was unanimously accepted by an informal international conference called by the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches. This gathering was unusually oecumenical and international in character, and met on the eve of the present war. Their statement declares:

We should hardly remain within the limits of Biblical promise if we expected that within this sinful world the nations of the earth could ever be a perfectly harmonious family of nations, entirely governed by the spirit of love. But we do believe that, even in the hard impersonal

world of states, certain basic principles can and should be the standards of order and conduct. Among these principles must be included the *equal dignity of all men*, respect for human life, acknowledgement of the solidarity for good and evil of all nations and races of the earth, respect for the plighted word, and the recognition that power of any kind, political or economic, must be co-extensive with responsibility. It is true that the proclamation and the acknowledgement of these principles does not as such solve one single concrete political problem. Nevertheless, these principles, if Christians are resolved to make them the basis of their political action, may have much effect and meaning in the present chaotic situation where all such standards are being abandoned.<sup>11</sup>

The Oxford Conference also expressed itself on this point in a way that challenges current social practice:

*It is no part of the teaching of Christianity that all men are equally endowed by nature, or that identical provision should be made for all, irrespective of difference of capacity and need. What it does assert is that all men are children of one Father, and that, compared with that primary and overwhelming fact, the differences between the races, nationalities and classes of men, though important on their own plane, are external and trivial. Any social arrangement which outrages the dignity of man, by treating some men as ends and others as means, any institution which obscures the common humanity of men by emphasizing the external accidents of birth, or wealth, or social position, is ipso facto anti-Christian. . . .*

There is one aspect of the subject which deserves special emphasis. Whatever their differences on other subjects, Christians cannot be in doubt as to the primary duty of ensuring that the conditions required for full personal development are enjoyed by the whole of the rising generation. In some countries that obligation receives fuller recognition than in others, but of few, if any, can it be said that *equal opportunities of physical and mental growth are available for all.*<sup>12</sup> (Italics ours.)

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### EQUALITY

1. What does equality mean? (A few different interpretations are suggested to stimulate discussion—others may be added.)
  - a. Everyone paid the same income and treated in the same way, with no special regard or privileges for anyone.
  - b. More concern and protection for the weak, aged, ill, exploited, etc., to overcome their disadvantages.

---

<sup>11</sup> William Paton, "The Church and the New Order", p. 63. S.C.M. Press, 1941.

<sup>12</sup> The Message and Decisions of Oxford on Church, Community and State, Oxford Conference, 1937.

- c. Every child, irrespective of family income and status, required to attend school until eighteen years of age.
- d. Every child, irrespective of family income or status, enabled to attend the school for which he qualifies on academic grounds until he is prepared for the occupation which his aptitudes, inclination and training lead him to select.

2. What conclusions, with respect to the problem of human equality, should we draw from the sinful nature of man? Should we say "Because man is sinful, it is utopian to advocate equal opportunities for all (with respect to education, health, nutrition, etc.)", or "Because man is sinful, it is especially important to protect him from the egotism, lust for power and desire to exploit and dominate, by assuring all people equality of opportunity"?

3. Some Christians who hold the first position stated in the text, do so on the grounds that "the laws of nature are not based on equality". Is nature as it is, to be accepted as the basis for an understanding of the orders of creation, and as a pattern for behavior? What is our attitude toward physical defects in human beings—one of acceptance as being a part of nature, or of striving to overcome them?

4. The views of Monsieur Maritain are included because they are representative not only of Catholic opinion, but also of that of many Protestants who accept the first position stated above. What do you think is the truth in this position, and what are the dangers?

5. How does justice based on the securing of differing rights to differing groups contrast with justice based on the egalitarian concept? Who is to decide what the "needs" of different groups are in "proportional equality"? For example, who is to decide that a cobbler's son should be given different (or the same) opportunities as a judge's son?

6. In the second position stated above, what is the truth and what are the dangers?

7. "Some men are born to rule; others to be ruled"; "Some men are born to work hard under unpleasant conditions (miners, for instance), but this work is essential for the good of society". Do you agree with these statements? If so, how do you overcome the inertia by which progress is stifled? Does one human being have the right to decide that another human being is "born" to a hard life? If you do not agree with this view, how do you define the

possibilities of equality when men do have different capacities, needs and temperaments?

8. What does equality require in terms of responsibility?
9. In your country what part do the goals and motives of education play in creating the right or wrong attitude toward other people?
10. The Oxford Conference expressed the conviction that Christians must work for a society in which "equal opportunities of physical and mental growth are available for all". What changes in the present distribution of food, medical services, education and housing would be required in your nation—for both urban and rural youth of all races—if this were to be realized? How do you see this being achieved? What are the present blocks to the realization of this goal, e.g., income levels, racial discrimination, etc.? What steps can Christian groups take?

11. Discuss the degree to which "equal opportunities of physical and mental growth are available for all" in, for example, a fascist country like Germany, a communist country like the Soviet Union, a democratic country, a Catholic fascist country like Spain. Does the system itself make justice impossible, granted there is a will to justice?

## COMMUNITY

One of the most significant and far-reaching ways in which Christianity has made an impact on the world is in its teaching about and demonstration of the fact of human solidarity. Jesus was an offense because he dealt with a Samaritan, a Roman centurion, a woman taken in sin, publicans, etc., as if they were on the same level as religious Jews. The Gospel was preached "to all the world". The early Christian community radically declared that in Christ there were no Jews or Greeks, all were one. "He took on himself the form of a slave". Throughout its history, Christianity has made for a unifying force, for universality in outlook and behavior. In spite of the fact that states have often sought to use religion to solidify barriers of nation, race and class, Christianity has always broken through and proclaimed a gospel which by its work tore down their barriers.

This fact about the Christian faith is of great import today and is no less a cause of offense than it was in the first century. A recent

pamphlet *Das Reich als Aufgabe* (The Reich as a Task) by F. Schmidt, Vice Gauleiter of Wurtemberg,<sup>13</sup> speaks of Christianity in this way:

We have no right to realize our claim to leadership in Europe so long as we do not have the courage to overcome, in a revolutionary way, the powers of a spiritual and political community-idea, which has lasted for nearly two thousand years, and to set the new National-Socialist idea in its place. . . .

*The Idea of the Universal Church.* At the beginning of European history, after the collapse of the Roman Empire, the idea of the Universal Church, as the idea of a community which has to stand above the nations of the world, spread abroad in Europe. This Church, as the spokesman of Christianity, recognized no specific qualities in nations and men. It tore the individual man out of his national context, raised him to be an individual soul-bearer, and then told him he was free from all laws of nature, earth and creation. . . .

In the further course of historical development, there arose at the time when the mediaeval period was passing into the modern age, a new community-idea: the idea of humanity. . . . Here the individual man was already regarded as an individual economic capacity, as a functional unit of economic laws. It was out of this spiritual soil, which had been very well prepared by Christianity by its destruction of all natural bonds in accordance with its ideas, that liberalism and Marxism grew up.

Christianity is being attacked in the world today because it affirms the universality of its truth, because it denies the man-made barriers of race and nation and class as having any significance in the eyes of God.

The Christian conviction concerning the solidarity of the human race is based on its fundamental faith: that God is the Creator, the Judge and Redeemer of *all* human life. Professor Brunner says:<sup>14</sup>

In the New Testament the vision of unity which was only begun or suggested in the Old Testament is fulfilled. The New Testament is concerned with the old and new Adam, with "man" and with "all men." They have all been created by God after His image, they have all become sinners, the message of redemption is intended for them all, whether they accept it and thus participate in it or not. The aim of redemption is absolutely universal and for all mankind, and in view of all this all other differentiations fall out of sight. "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." . . . All the chief Christian doctrines which concern man, beginning with the central dogma of the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, by which the whole human race with all its races is included in the redemption, the doctrine of the *Imago Dei* and the

---

<sup>13</sup> International Christian Press and Information Service, No. 1, 1942.

<sup>14</sup> Emil Brunner, "Man in Revolt", p. 332. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

peccatum originis [original sin], have either no validity at all, or have absolute validity, which means that they exclude every kind of racial discrimination.

This Christian doctrine of solidarity does not rest on a vague sentimentality about the human race. It is rooted in the command to love, and in the meaning of love. Love, if it is to be more than an insincere emotion, is the result of an identification—the identification of our wills with the will of God and our fate with that of all men, however obscure, fallen and needy. We cannot truly identify ourselves with the fate of others until we accept our interdependence. As soon as we think that we are, or behave as if we were sufficient unto ourselves, or that our race is the sole instrument of culture, or that we can be saved by ourselves, or that we can be secure by ourselves while others are insecure, then we deny the whole basis of love.

Paul made this fact of interdependence crystal clear in one of the most beautiful and challenging statements of human solidarity that has ever been written:

If the foot were to say "Because I am not the hand, I do not belong to the body", that does not make it no part of the body. If the ear were to say, "Because I am not the eye, I do not belong to the body", that does not make it no part of the body. If the body were all eye, where would hearing be? . . . The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." . . . Quite the contrary. *Corinthians 12:15-21* (Moffatt).

We are inescapably all members one of another.

In the individualism of the 19th and 20th centuries we have, to our devastation, lost sight of this truth. The belief that if each man pursued his own individual good, the net result would be for the benefit of the whole of society, has left us in terrible straits today. The isolation of man from his fellows, the anarchic pursuit of self-interest by some, and the desperate search for community by others, characterize our era. We all share the judgment for our denial of community.

Man is a social being; he cannot live unto himself alone, nor unto his nation, class, or creed. "Man grows up into a true *person* through his community relationships. It is essentially upon the responsible response that he makes to the demands of others upon him, and the challenge of others to him that creative community life is built and carried on." In a statement on Social Justice and

Economic Reconstruction prepared by the Commission of the Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility (Great Britain), this social character of man is indicated:

In virtue of his social nature man needs to live in habitual cooperation with his fellows. The foundations of human character are laid in the experience of family life, and this provides an invaluable training ground for life in the wider family of mankind. The full and free cooperation of the individual with the community depends upon the existence of a just standard of right as between himself and his neighbours, a right he feels he ought to accord to them and they to him. To say this is not to exalt rights over duties. Right and duty are correlative terms. My duty to my neighbour only takes on meaning when I know what are his fundamental rights. Duties remain vague and indefinite till rights are defined. Nor can the community fairly put pressure on its individual members to fulfill their social responsibilities without at the same time safeguarding them in their essential human rights. To press my individual claim against the claim of another individual may be an anti-social act; but to acclaim a universal standard of right and defend it for all men is one of the most perfect social acts a man can perform. This social equality in man is affronted by the assumptions on which much economic activity is at present organized. Our economic system makes a man's relation with his fellows and not his fortune only, subordinated to the blind play of economic forces.

The atomization of society, the loss of old forms by which society was integrated, the helplessness of the individual before political, economic and social forces, his inability to recapture on an adequate scale a solidarity with his fellows related to constructive ends, all these facts challenge Christians not only to speak boldly their faith, but to witness in the community to the fact of the solidarity and interdependence of the human race.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### COMMUNITY

1. In what ways have the Church and individual Christians been affected by the individualism which has characterized nations in modern times?
2. Do Christian groups in your community—the Churches, the Y.W.C.A., etc., give evidence by their membership and activities of the solidarity and interdependence of all people, or do they tend to reflect the economic, racial and other stratifications of the community?
3. In what way does the denial of human solidarity relate to the

earlier discussion in the section on Sin? What special forms has this denial of human solidarity taken in recent years? What special forms does it take in your nation?

4. Discuss the relation of rights and duties. What elements compose "a universal standard of right" which we must "proclaim for all men"? What duties must be proclaimed in relation to these rights?

5. Discuss the relation of the potency and dynamic character of the absence of fear which characterized the early Christian community, in the light of the fact that they were a community.

6. What are the outstanding groups which are seeking to create new solidarities among men today? Evaluate each. How does the Christian relate to these?

7. What principles has Christianity to offer on which a new integration of society can occur, and community among men and nations be re-established?

8. What is and should be the relation of the world Christian community to the secular community? How do we avoid making our experience of the world Christian community a substitute for the hard task of creating community in secular society?

## CHAPTER III

# The Christian Basis in Relation to Political Organization

THIS is a difficult subject for the ordinary citizen and layman, yet it is one which cannot be ignored or dealt with superficially. The war now raging is total war, not only geographically but in the sense that it is like a fire consuming the institutions which have given a semblance of order, albeit an uneasy order, to the common life. As one writer has put it:<sup>1</sup> "Humanity is on the march. It has left its old fixed habitations, and is living again in tents on a pilgrimage". This is not only true of those who have undertaken this combat in the name of a "New Order" for Europe and "The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere". It is also true of those who fight to resist these particular forms of new order. Millions of men and women in older democratic countries who are fighting in the name of freedom have no desire to return to the old laissez-faire individualism, to the unbridled competition of self-seeking groups. Every proposal for post-war organization of society which has come from Christian groups in these countries has set forth the necessity for social and economic planning to protect human dignity and rights, and to secure the benefits of modern science for all the people. These proposals would seem like rank dictatorship rather than freedom, to the eighteenth and nineteenth century advocates of unrestricted "freedom of enterprise".

It is essential, if the words we use in this discussion are to be related to actual historical situations and not just to be abstractions, that we keep clearly in mind the distinction between, on the one hand, the democratic idea—the philosophy of democracy—and, on the other hand, the institutions of democracy.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEMOCRACY

Behind all the struggles by which peoples have sought political freedom, from the American Revolution of 1776 to the Spanish Civil

---

<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Allen, "Law and Liberty", p. 9, S.C.M. Press, 1942.

War of 1935, lay an idea, a faith, a belief about man, about right social relationships and about human destiny. This philosophy found its clearest voice in the eighteenth century philosophers and statesmen who championed a new order, although its roots lay deep in human history; in the Bible, in the Greek tradition, and, for Anglo-Saxons, in Magna Carta. The Magnificat celebrates the God who "puts down the mighty from their seats and exalts the humble and meek". Jesus says, "Call no man master, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren".

Democracy is a belief in the common man as against an élite of blood, education, or of any other norm by which some men are set apart as destined to rule the masses of men. Four affirmations characterize the democratic philosophy: (1) men are by nature free and independent; (2) they have certain inalienable rights: life, liberty, (freedom from oppression) and the right to pursue that which is essential to their happiness; (3) they possess these rights because they are the creatures and servants of God who so endowed them with dignity and responsibility;<sup>2</sup> (4) these rights cannot be overridden by the state.<sup>3</sup>

The war which is raging today is not so much a war against the political *institutions* of democratic nations, for these very institutions are being radically transformed in the process of the war, but it is a war against the democratic *philosophy*. Fascism is a philosophy which, at every point, radically denies the ideas embodied in the democratic philosophy of government.

#### THE INSTITUTIONS OF DEMOCRACY

The particular form of the political institutions in which the democratic philosophy becomes embodied in any particular nation at any particular time in history, will vary according to the history of the nation, its stage of economic development, the relationship in which it stands to conditions in other nations, the particular grievance which produced the revolution, etc. Since this is a global war in every sense, we cannot approach these questions as if only European and Anglo-Saxon countries were involved. The nations involved in the war were at very different stages of political develop-

---

<sup>2</sup> The secular adherents of the democratic faith would see these rights as derived from nature, rather than from Deity.

<sup>3</sup> See C.E.M. Joad: "What is at Stake and Why Not Say So". Gollancz, 1941.

ment when this war began and were governed, consequently, by very different political institutions, though many of them would have called themselves democracies. Some of them were older democracies whose institutions received their form in the eighteenth century at the culmination of a long struggle of the rising bourgeoisie against feudalism. Theirs is therefore called "bourgeois democracy". The Chinese democratic revolution began in 1910, and was still in progress, with many of its institutions yet in a fluid state when the Japanese invasion began. In Russia, the overthrow of the semi-feudal, autocratic, Czarist regime came in 1917. The Soviet Union is experimenting with what they call "democratic centralism" as the particular form of their institutions. The Mexican revolution came to stability in the twentieth century and consequently their particular form of democratic institutions differs from that of the United States. Then there are some parts of the world, for example, India and the Philippines, where the people were struggling to emerge from foreign rule and the status of colonial dependency to independence and self-government when the war began.

A brief sketch of the major outlines of the development in the older democracies may serve to illustrate the dilemma in which many of these nations find themselves as they face the fundamental question of how, in a highly complex, interdependent, increasingly industrialized (and hence urbanized) world, their political institutions must be changed if a new order is to be created after they have defeated fascism.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps a (too) brief review of the highlights of the history of democracy will be more useful in revealing the problems, than the statement, in an abstract fashion, of the issues.

The older democracies acquired their dominant political institutions as a result of a long struggle lasting from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, in which men sought first religious freedom and then political and economic liberty. This movement expressed itself religiously in the Protestant Reformation, politically, in the development of representative, democratic government, and economically, in unrestricted freedom of enterprise, the corner-stone of capitalism. This revolution was accomplished in varying degrees in

---

<sup>4</sup> Among several nations which established the democratic form of government in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there has been greater flexibility in adapting political institutions to changing economic conditions in the interest of public welfare, e.g., Scandinavian countries and Australia.

the so-called "western" nations and leadership of the world passed into the hands of these nations which freed themselves from the outmoded institutions of the old order. They were released to apply the discoveries of a then infant but potent science to the material resources they possessed and to the discovery and conquest of vast new territories and resources. Space here precludes a review of the development of the industrial revolution. Since the beginning, in the older democracies, the political ideas, i.e. the democratic faith, and the economic necessities were at war with each other. Political liberty and economic laissez-faire drove in different directions when considered from the point of view of the welfare of all the people. For a long period of development, this struggle was more or less hidden. In the last two decades it has come out into the open, and democracy has been weakened by it. On the one hand there was the faith in the common man, the idea of "every man a king" who could have a voice in ruling himself, the dignity of the individual, the responsibility of man, the freedom of all peoples. On the other hand, there was the growing power of industrial combines, the subjugation of so-called "backward peoples", the helplessness of an individual city-dwelling worker to provide food and shelter for his family, save as the use of his labor at a machine could produce a profit for absentee owners. The political freedom to cast a ballot for the law-makers seemed a hollow substitute for the dignity of having a job and supporting one's dependents in decency. More and more, the political authority in many nations was revealed as either a cloak for powerful economic interests, or as helpless to fulfill its functions of mediating between the various interests, with a view to protecting the welfare of all its citizens. Political leaders were without authority, or the will to exercise the authority, to protect the common welfare.

The doctrine of the democratic revolution of the eighteenth century, that the state was not to interfere with the economic life of its citizens, that "no government was good government" (with respect, at least, to freedom of enterprise) was, in the beginning, essential in order to free production and distribution from the shackles of feudalism. In the twentieth century, this doctrine left the masses of citizens helpless before economic interests which determined their very lives. On the one hand, there was the frustration of the ideals of the worth and dignity of every man, which had made

democracy a living faith and dynamic force. On the other hand, there was the frustration of God's gifts to the human race, as men starved in the presence of the potential plenty which science had made possible. Men were not equal as the democratic revolution had envisaged; they were in fact unequal in their capacities to provide the necessities of life for their families. Democratic society had become stratified in class groups. Men were not really responsible for the decisions in public policy which affected their lives, for political democracy without economic democracy in a technological age made a mockery of true social responsibility.

These contradictions, and many more of deep spiritual and psychological import, produced the antithesis of the democratic ideal in fascism. Fascism proclaimed the "divine inequality of man" by establishing a hierarchical society of "master and slave" peoples, and proclaimed the irresponsibility of the masses of men by requiring them to delegate all responsibility to the leader.

As Christians face the question of the kind of society which they strive for and want to see emerge from the present fiery trial, they are more and more forced back to the very fundamental questions which must be faced from the Christian point of view: What is the true function of the state? What form of social organization can ensure the freedom and responsibility essential to the true dignity of human beings, and at the same time have the authority to institute and carry through the social planning and regulation of the common life essential to order, justice and the promotion of the common welfare? Are an efficient and responsible government and a responsible citizenry mutually exclusive? How can the responsibility be extended, i.e. participation in decision, to the economic as well as to the political realm for all citizens? How far can you extend the authority of the state and still have democracy? What is the right combination of freedom and authority?

To discuss these questions, it is essential to define various political concepts which are widely used today in discussing this issue, and to estimate their strength and weaknesses from the Christian point of view.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> A word of warning about definitions. These should not be used as measuring rods as such wide variations are possible within each concept, and the divorce between theory and practice is so great. The faith, the theory, the goals of one form should not be contrasted with the practice of another.

#### a. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

The philosophy of democracy has been discussed above. It is put vividly by a German political scientist, now living in the United States: "There are no two ways about the common man. Either he is destined forever because of his fickleness, his un wisdom and his selfishness to be ruled by his 'bettters' or he has, in the mass, a wisdom and steadiness of his own that will keep him free. The doctrine of rule by the gifted, or well-born, or powerful few has been widespread. . . . The mass of the common people are, in the long run, less likely to be wrong than the individual judgment of any superman or the limited judgment of any self-appointed élite".<sup>6</sup>

The institutions which by and large characterize the liberal democratic state are: "a freely elected and representative Parliament; an executive government responsible through Parliament to the people; a constitution that secures wide liberty of association, of meeting, of speech and of writing; a law that binds government as well as citizen".<sup>7</sup>

#### *Strengths of Democratic Government*

The dignity of man is protected. Human beings do not increase their capacity to be responsible unless they are given responsibility. Human nature is such that man seeks to avoid responsibility, to delegate it. But in the Christian view, that is part of the sinful nature of man. God, the Father, not only created man (who is therefore subject to Him) but left man free, i.e. *responsible*, to choose salvation or destruction. Democracy is therefore the form of political organization which is most consonant with the Christian view of man.

"Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". Democracy prevents this by distributing power and rendering those who exercise it responsible to the people.

Democracy is the only form of political organization in our modern highly complex and highly organized common life which leaves the Christian conscience free to express itself with reference to social and human relations.

---

<sup>6</sup> Carl J. Frederick, "The New Belief in the Common Man", Little, Ives and Co. 1942.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth Bailey, Professor of Public Law, Melbourne University, "What Are We Fighting For?", p. 19. (A pamphlet series by Australian writers entitled "The Christian and the War".)

In spite of the fact that democracy is often accused of inefficiency, its adherents deny this, pointing to the civil service administration in modern democracies, which assures high calibre and uncorrupted public servants, without the abuses characteristic of public service in a dictatorial or autocratic regime.

### *Weaknesses of Democratic Government*

Democracy as we know it today in many countries is bourgeois, capitalist democracy, which fails to give either freedom or responsibility to the masses of people in the social decisions which most vitally affect their lives.

Democracy is too slow and lacking in decision to afford adequate government for the welfare of the people in modern life. It seems paralyzed by the conflicting interests within it, it is a "babel of tongues".

Democracy tends either to bureaucracy (in the "social service" state), or to anarchy, where adequate social controls over powerful political or economic groups are lacking.

Democracy reduces the life of the nation to mediocrity; it tends to get the "lowest common denominator".

### b. TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENT

In totalitarian government, the rulers are completely independent of the wishes of the ruled, and have complete authority over every aspect of the citizen's life. One individual, with a small group of his satellites, determines what the law is to be. One of the correspondents participating in this study writes:

The only governments which can be called totalitarian in their rule are those which not only bring every aspect of the national life under their control, but also constitute themselves the supreme judge of all the earthly life of their citizens, and themselves determine what their law is to be according to their interests. An excellent example of this attitude is the National Socialist phrase: "Recht ist, was Deutschland nutzt" (Right is what is useful to Germany); and the other equally notorious phrase: "Wer Adolph Hitler dient, dient Deutschland; wer Deutschland dient, dient Gott" (He who serves Adolph Hitler serves Germany, he who serves Germany serves God).

### *Strengths of Totalitarian Government*

The advocates of the absolute state emphasize its efficiency, its lack of waste, its ability to get things done with firmness and dispatch.

The totalitarian state, its philosophers claim, is true to the nature of man, who is a creature to be ruled and driven, a creature who seeks to delegate responsibility, who is happiest and most effective when told what to do.

Man has no inherent dignity and meaning as an individual; his life has meaning only when he is the obedient, unquestioning servant of a higher authority, the state. Man exists only to serve the state; the state does not exist to serve man.

### *Weaknesses of Totalitarian Government*

In the totalitarian state human beings, as human beings, are debased and their essential human dignity destroyed. The family is destroyed since the sole object of human devotion is the state and the leader. Men cease to be creative, and culture is an immediate casualty of a totalitarian regime.

The conscience of man is denied any possibility of free expression.

The political authority is not subject to law, but creates its own law from day to day, on the initiative of one man, who is responsible to no one but himself, and who makes the new law retroactive. Violence is a state monopoly and ruthlessly employed to secure unflinching obedience in every area of life. "Crimes" are punished without a hearing for the accused and usually without trial.

Minorities—racial, political, nationality, and religious—are ruthlessly persecuted and denied any freedom of expression or opportunity to make any distinctive contribution to the common life.

### C. AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT

Some of our European correspondents who have been contributing to this study, emphasize the necessity to consider a more authoritarian form of government than obtains under most modern parliamentary democracies. To see the relation of the authoritarian concept to democracy in the proposals, it might be helpful to point out the differences between the conceptions of the democratic method in several European democracies and that in certain Anglo-Saxon countries, especially the United States. This can best be illustrated from the practices of Y.W.C.A. club groups. In some European countries, the democratic method involves the election of a leader whose job is then to give leadership, including the initiation of

policies, etc. When the club no longer likes the type of leadership and policies offered by their leader, it is their responsibility to depose that leader and secure a new one. This type of leader clearly has more authority and more responsibility. In a club group in the United States, for instance, the group decides all policies and how they will be carried out, and the job of the club leader is to see that this is done, i.e. leadership is a purely administrative job. The disadvantages of the continental method are: that unless the membership takes a constantly active interest, one person or small group has all the responsibility and can "run things" to suit themselves; that it fails to develop the latent abilities of many members of the group because it fails to distribute responsibility. The disadvantages of the other method are: that the decisions and policies are at best compromises and are frequently the lowest common denominator; that it can tend to mediocrity; that it often involves the group being paralyzed by conflicting interests; that members are often asked to make decisions which they are not equipped to make.

Many Christians, especially in Europe, who are struggling with these questions feel that parliamentary democracy is so "exposed to the danger of disintegration, because of its lack of authority and discipline" that a more authoritarian government is needed. They would have the executive of the government enjoy a "stronger, more independent position" in relation to parliament. This point of view has been expressed by various leaders who have contributed the "raw materials" of this study. It is summarized in the following statement:

It is true that large numbers of people on the continent of Europe are convinced that "democracy has failed". But it is wrong to draw the conclusion that, therefore, they desire some form of totalitarian government. Most of these who express the conviction that democracy has failed mean by this that the party system as practiced in the last twenty years has failed, but are in no way partisans of dictatorial government and state-absolutism. They have their doubts about direct government by the people, because of the constant interference by parliaments in executive government, and desire to distinguish more clearly between the executive function of the government and the legislative or controlling opposition and of the restrictions imposed on governments by law. Judging from the present position in many European countries, it would seem that there will be no enthusiasm in the post-war Europe for the kind of democracy as practiced in pre-dictatorial Germany, France or Italy, but that there will be room for a democracy in which the government has a strong and independent position and so can act without losing precious time.

Christian writers on this subject emphasize that those who hold power in the authoritarian government must be responsible to a higher authority—to God. One writer says:

So long as those who hold authority recognize that they have received authority from a higher Power, and that they are responsible for their exercise of authority to that higher Power, their rule may be a healthy thing for the community.

A Swiss correspondent writes:

The confederates who formed the Pact of 1291 (in which the Swiss Confederation was formed) were chiefly concerned in their struggles not with this or that form of state, and least of all with the desire to possess boundless, anarchical freedom, they rose up in the name of the true Authority, the authority of *God*, against a false rule which was oppressing them in every respect. So there stands at the beginning and end of their first federal proclamation the name of God, the Lord, as the basis, beginning, and end of the freedom without which life seemed to them not worth living. Under this authority, in the freedom given them by God, they ordered their political common life, came together to their national assemblies, and elected their judges and administrators. They called their Confederation an "Oath-Comradeship" because they had bound themselves together in a solemn act before God for the maintenance of the true freedom.

### *Strengths of Authoritarian Government*

The advocates of a more authoritarian government stress the following:

The authoritarian principle is not alien to Christianity for in the Christian view, if man is to realize his true freedom he is a "man under authority". Freedom in Christianity is a product—a product of bondage to God and His Will. The authoritarian state thus embodies the basic Christian insight concerning freedom. It is a more sure guarantee of freedom for man than the anarchic freedom affirmed in the eighteenth century liberal concepts of the state.

The authoritarian state, it is held, would combine the responsibility of political leaders to the law of the nation, and at the same time enable them to act decisively. It would free the executive authority from the necessity to "pander to the political and economic influences" on the Parliament.

In modern democracies, which are secular and torn by internal contradictions and strife, the values which the nation is supposed to be serving, become lost or debased. The people are "like sheep without a shepherd". Dynamic faith in destiny of the nation is

vitated. A strong executive whose authority is derived from its responsibility to God would give the spiritual as well as political leadership essential if nations are to fulfill their destiny.

### *Weaknesses of Authoritarian Government*

Those who are skeptical of authoritarianism in government stress:

The advocacy of authoritarian government with a strong executive in itself does not indicate the nature of the new order. Authoritarian government can be exercised on behalf of vested interests and privileged groups and in this case would be an attempt to turn the clock of history back. On behalf of which groups in society would the authority be exercised?

"Power corrupts", and the stronger the power the greater the corruption, to paraphrase Lord Acton. The fact that the leaders see their authority as derived from God does not necessarily prevent this danger, and may even enhance it, since some of the most heinous crimes in history have been committed by men of power acting in the name of the will of God.

The advocates of authoritarian government and an independent executive do not indicate how those with the authority are to secure their power. Are they to be elected or appointed? If appointed, by whom? To whom would they be responsible?

Authoritarian government decreases the ability of people to govern themselves. It does not offer the opportunity by which latent leadership among the apparently more ordinary members of the community can be developed. People learn by taking responsibility, even though it is a slower, more trial and error way.

In modern highly complex and integrated nations, where the control of education, radio, press, etc. can be so easily accomplished and so devastatingly used, to give more power, authority and control into the hands of a leader or of a few leaders can be vastly more dangerous than was authoritarian government in the pre-democratic era, when education and communication were less developed. In other words, authoritarian government in the modern world with its different historical conditions must necessarily be different from the authoritarian regime of Mediaeval Europe.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

1. Abraham Lincoln once said that "the object of government is to elevate the conditions of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race for life". Do you agree with this statement? How is it related to (or different from) the Christian view? What form of political organization and what political institutions in the modern world would it entail?

2. If your nation is a democratic nation, what is the statement of the *purpose* or philosophy of your democracy? When was it made? What are the particular institutions which are the political means for accomplishing that purpose? How have these changed with changing conditions?

3. Analyze the philosophy and practice of democratic governments and of totalitarian governments from the point of view of the Christian basis set forth in Chapter II: their concept of man, of the right use of the resources of the earth, of the right human relations with respect to the family, race relations, class relations, nationality minorities, relations between nations, etc.; their concept of human equality, of community, of the freedom of the Christian conscience to express itself, of the freedom of the Church, of the freedom of education.

4. What are the chief obstacles to the realization of the ideals and purposes of democracy in your country? How can they be remedied?

5. What is the difference between democracy and individualism? Between democracy and anarchy? Are the attitudes: "No one is going to tell *me* what to do" and "No government is good government" really democratic? What conditions gave rise to this concept of democracy in certain countries (e.g. the United States)?

6. "Equality and security are being recognized as necessary if liberty is to be anything but the privilege of a minority" (Professor Kenneth Bailey, op. cit.). Do you agree? What modifications in the eighteenth century concepts of democratic institutions are necessary to secure equality and security in the modern world?

7. Professor Karl Manneheim, in a recent letter to *The Christian*

*Newsletter* (England) cogently puts the problem which those of us who believe in freedom and responsibility must face:

The whole structure of modern society is governed by the fact that new technical inventions . . . and large-scale organization of industry, finance, administration, education and other means of influencing public opinion have created key positions which make it possible for those who hold them to dominate society. This offers a strong temptation to the ambitious to seize these centres of power and, when they have embarked on this course, they are driven on to gather into their hands all remaining positions of control. Even those who are naturally averse to such a course may be forced into it by the fear that their opponents may act first.

Discuss this statement. To what extent is this result of the development of new techniques an important factor in the life of your nation? How do these new centers of power operate to control society? For what purpose? What controls exist as a check on their domination of society? How effective are these controls? In the light of these new conditions produced by the advance of technology, how can we secure freedom and responsibility for the ordinary citizen and worker in the new society?

8. What effect does the control of the means of communication by powerful political or economic interests have on the possibility of effective democracy? What can be done to prevent this?

9. How can we be at the same time efficient cogs in a great machine like a modern army, or the modern economic structure, and still retain as Christians the sense of moral responsibility for our own decisions, and our country's decisions?

10. What rôle does the collective organization of responsibility (e.g. trade unions, political parties, cooperatives, etc.) play in securing freedom and responsibility under modern conditions?

11. If a more authoritarian form of democracy is necessary to fulfill the proper function of the state under modern conditions, what conditions are essential if this authority is not to become totalitarian? What purpose must the authority serve? In whose interests must it operate? What controls over the executive must exist?

12. Wherein would a government which combined more authority for the Executive than is now true of Parliamentary democracies, with a more socialist economic organization, be similar to the "democratic centralism" of the Soviet Union? Wherein would

it be similar to National Socialism? What would make it more like one than the other?

13. Democracy is derided by fascist governments for its "inefficiency". To what end is the fascist form of political organization "efficient" (i.e. for what purpose)?

14. How can we achieve an order in which the people themselves decide major policies and then are *disciplined* in carrying them out? What is the proper rôle of minority groups in a democratic society?

15. Is the answer to the dilemma of the democracies as set forth in the text above to: have a stronger political authority; have less government interference in economic and social life; have more social and economic planning with the *objective* of the planning democratically decided; or what?

## THE CHURCH AND THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

The rise of the democratic people's movement seeking freedom and opportunity during the last two centuries, and the recent rise of totalitarian governments have constantly raised the difficult question of the relation of the Church to the political order. The problem, viewed not from the angle of theory but from that of the actual rôle of the Church as a social institution in relation to the political movements, is a very complex one. Not only in the early democratic revolt against feudalism in the eighteenth century, but even in the twentieth century, the Church resisted the democratic revolution. In Russia, Austria, Spain, Mexico, etc. those who were the champions of dignity, decency and freedom from oppression for the common man, had to turn away from the Church. Consequently, except in Anglo-Saxon countries, the democratic movement tended to be a secular movement, and in many cases anti-Church. In Anglo-Saxon countries, the silence of the Church on acute issues of social justice affecting the workers, and the identification of the Protestant Church with the middle and upper classes has also rendered large sections of the population indifferent, even if they are not actually opposed to the Church.

But today, on the other hand, the extension of totalitarian government in Germany and the occupied countries has found the Church speaking boldly and fearlessly, giving voice to the convic-

tions and aspirations of millions on the subject of human freedom. The persecution of the Church in Germany has forced the Christian Church in every country to face anew the question of the relation of the Church to the political order. The leadership which the Church has shown in these dark days, not only on the Continent but also in England, where again the organized religious movements even more than the government have given voice to the aspirations of its people struggling for freedom, has given it a new opportunity for leadership of the masses of men.

The World Conference on the Life and Work of the Churches held in Oxford in 1937, delved deeply into the question of the relation of the Church to the state. Two quotations from the report of the Conference may serve to summarize the findings of this section on this point:

#### *The Distinctive Functions of Church and State*

The Church's concern is to witness to men the realities which outlast change because they are founded on the eternal will of God. The concern of the state is to provide men with justice, order, and security in a world of sin and change. As it is the aim of the Church to create a community founded on divine love, it cannot do its work by coercion, nor can it compromise the standards embodied in God's commandments by surrender to the necessities of the day. The state, on the other hand, has the duty of maintaining public order, and therefore must use coercion and accept the limits of the practicable.

A further section of the Report is most useful on this question because it defines the differences among Christians, and points to the fact that these dissimilarities are rooted in theological differences.

#### *The Christian Interest in Human Freedom in General*

In regard to the responsibility of the Church for the maintenance of human freedom, its extent and the means and ways of its realizations, there exists considerable disagreement among Christians. Attention may be briefly directed to three conceptions which have their roots in profound theological differences.

For many Christians the unhindered self-development of the personality is the starting point of their thought about these questions. The state exists for the sake of the free man. The independence of the individual person and his freedom to fulfill himself in accordance with the immanent laws of his being is the decisive limit of the state. Since, according to this view, personal individuality is the highest good in history, every political and legal measure which infringes on the personal life is unjustified. It is plainly one of the primary responsibilities of the Church to further this unhindered freedom of every

man and to protect it against attacks from the side of the state, since it is the Gospel itself that proclaims with indisputable clearness the infinite worth of the individual soul. The Church must therefore demand freedom in the political sphere for the human person, for the family, for economic activity, and for the various cultural and other associations. Other Christians would maintain a precisely opposite point of view—namely, that there are no specifically Christian grounds and standards for the limitation of the state so long as the essential tasks of the Church itself are not involved. Christian freedom is an inner or eschatological freedom for which it is irrelevant how far the state extends its claims in the sphere of the social life. The freedom of the natural man and his subordination to the commands of the state is a matter of political responsibility. How far, for example, the state controls and guides economic effort and how in its legislation it regulates the position of national and racial minorities are matters that belong to the sphere of political expediency. The Church has no authority to demand in the name of the Gospel any rights either for individuals or for human associations.

The majority of Christians, however, with whatever differences in detail, would regard a third conception as more in harmony with the nature of the Gospel. They would neither agree with the view that the freedom of the Church is nothing more than a special instance of human freedom in general, nor with the view that it is not the business of the Church to take part in the unending struggle for a just equilibrium between political sovereignty and human freedom. The Church knows the demonic impulses which belong to the fallen man and which constantly transform freedom into license, and consequently when the state fails through weakness to protect one against the arbitrary conduct of another it must be a matter of serious concern for the Church. On the other hand, the Church knows that man has been created in the image of God and has therefore an indestructible value, which the state must not impair but rather safeguard. The destiny of man and the different social activities in their proper functioning—such as marriage, the family, the nation, and culture—constitute an irremovable limit of the state which it cannot with impunity transgress. A state which destroys human personality or human association, or subordinates them to its own ends, is therefore incompatible with the Christian understanding of life. The state ought, on the contrary, to employ its resources to insure that human freedom should find growing expression in the service of the neighbor and should not be used according to the prompting of natural inclination for self-assertion and irresponsible behavior. In this task it cannot dispense with the cooperation of the Church. It is therefore in no sense an attempt to meddle with what does not belong to it, but a simple act of obedience to God who is righteous and loving when the Church, so far as circumstances allow it, becomes the champion of true human freedom in cooperation with the state and when necessary in criticism of its measures.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> The Oxford Conference Official Report (additional Report of the Section on Church and State), pp. 249-252.

The third point of view has found vivid expression in the words of a modern philosopher:<sup>9</sup>

If Christianity is to become again a creative religion and rebuild community, it must not merely free itself from the modes of thought and outlook which belong to the (mediaeval) order. It must disentangle itself from all those elements in society whose effort and interest is to preserve the old order. In a revolutionary situation a creative religion is necessarily a revolutionary religion. The Christian Church can only recover its own essence when it stands unequivocally in the social order where Jesus stood: for the oppressed against the oppressors, for the poor against the rich, for the common people against the rulers, both temporal and spiritual. It must become the instrument, not of law and order, but of spontaneity and love. It must lose its life of vested interest and social prestige if it is to keep it unto life eternal. It must stand in the eyes of the nameless multitudes as the shining symbol of a power that puts down the mighty from their seats and exalts the humble and the meek. It must express in ritual the refusal of hierarchical privilege and authority and the faith in common humanity. It must be in itself what it demands for all, a brotherhood of common men.<sup>9</sup>

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### THE CHURCH AND THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

1. What is the distinction between God and the state? In what areas can the state be said to be the supreme and final authority? What are the areas of thought and conduct which can be said to be beyond the jurisdiction of the state? Discuss the following statement on this question, made by Bishop Culberg of Sweden:

The state needs the Church more than the Church needs the state. The Church should keep out of all party politics, although the individual pastor may have his political convictions. The clergy must, however, know how human society is effectively organized. The Church is unpolitical in so far as it does not take any special position on the question of the form of the state. One demand, however, which the Church has to hold fast, is that the state should maintain law and order. Thus the Church cannot suffer freedom of conscience to be encroached upon. If any such infringement takes place, the Church must intervene. If the state attempts to make the Church serve its purposes, the Church must say no. The attitude of the Norwegian Church is a model example of the attitude the Church must take when the state interferes in the most essential things in the life of the Church.

2. What is your idea of the proper function of the state, from

---

<sup>9</sup>John Macmurray, "Challenge to the Churches; Religion and Democracy", Kegan Paul.

the Christian point of view? From the Christian point of view does the state have a responsibility to promote the common welfare of all its citizens (i.e. a positive and dynamic function) as well as the function of maintaining law and order?

3. Should the Church have any concern with the political policies of the state?

4. Discuss the three positions held by Christians as set forth in the Oxford Conference (see text above).

The first position might be characterized as the "liberal" view, the second as the "conservative" view and the third as the "realist" view.

What consequences did the view, stated in the first position, that the Church's responsibility was to protect the individual in his political, economic and cultural freedom from restrictions by the state, have on the slowness with which protective social legislation developed in certain countries, e.g. the United States?

What consequences did the view, stated in the second position, that the Church had no responsibility for what the state did, for example, with respect to the treatment of racial minorities, have on the development of the National Socialist movement in Germany?

What consequences for the Church's activity with relation to the state would follow from the third point of view?

In the light of the nature of modern society, which position would enable the Church to have the greatest influence in the direction of realizing in the common life the Christian principles concerning the right of human relations?

5. How do you account for the fact that the totalitarian regimes we have known in modern times (Italy under Mussolini, Germany under Hitler, Greece under Metaxas, and Spain under Franco) have had a State Church, with the Church occupying a strong position of leadership in the political and cultural, as well as in the religious spheres?

6. Why is the Protestant Church made up largely of members of the middle and upper classes? What consequences has this fact for the effort to secure a new society based on the Christian view of man and human relations?

7. What should be the relation of Christian groups to secular groups working for social change? What Christian principles also

motivate the secular humanitarians who seek a new society, even though they would not call these principles Christian? What guidance may be obtained from the biblical story of the complaint of the disciples that there were those "casting out devils" who did not use the name of Jesus, and the reply which Jesus made to them? What guidance does Matthew 7:21 offer? What implications for this question has Jesus' injunction to his disciples to "take heed that the Kingdom of God is not taken from you and given to those bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance?"

## CHAPTER IV

# The Christian Basis in Relation to Economic Problems

[In connection with this chapter, re-read the portion of Chapter II, pp. 19-21, dealing with the relation of the Christian faith to the resources of the earth, as well as pp. 22-27, dealing with the contradiction between economic and political liberty.]

THE war has come on the heels of a decade or more of economic collapse in most of the countries whose economic life has been based on the particular system of producing and distributing goods which we call capitalism. In the prosecution of the war, far-reaching changes have already occurred in the economic system of these nations. The kind of planning essential to secure the maximum use of the application of science to production and distribution which was not undertaken in the interest of the general welfare in time of peace, has become a necessity in time of war. Millions of men and women are determined that their nations shall not go back to the old laissez-faire and half-hearted state regulation of powerful economic forces which characterized the pre-war era. Government plans, as well as private plans, put forth in those nations still able to do such planning (U. S. A., Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc.), all envisage far-reaching changes in the economic relations within these nations.

In all of this planning, the voice of Christians, speaking as Christians, has been plainly heard. The greatest impetus to Christian thinking on this subject was given at the Oxford Conference where a searching analysis from the Christian point of view of the failure of capitalism in the twentieth century to meet basic human needs was made, and where the principles which the Christian faith proclaims for the economic life of nations were defined. The Oxford Conference made an authoritative and searching analysis of our present economic order in capitalist countries from the perspective of the Christian doctrine of stewardship. This analysis may be epitomized by the following abstract from the report:

The subordination of God's purpose for human life to the demands of the economic process seems in practice to be a tendency common to all existing kinds of economic organization. In particular we draw attention to certain features of modern life in the so-called capitalist countries of the world:

(1) The ordering of economic life has tended to enhance acquisitiveness and to set up a false standard of economic and social success.

(2) Indefensible inequalities of opportunity in regard to education, leisure and health continue to prevail; and the existence of economic classes present an obstacle to human fellowship which cannot be tolerated by the Christian conscience.

(3) Centers of economic power have been formed which are not responsible to any organ of the community and which in practice constitute something in the nature of a tyranny over the lives of masses of men.

(4) The only forms of employment open to many men and women, or the fact that none is open at all, prevent them from finding a sense of Christian vocation in their daily life . . .

The possibility of economic "plenty" has this moral importance, that to an increasing extent it makes the persistence of poverty a matter for which men are morally responsible. This possibility marks off our time from the period of the New Testament and from other periods in which Christian thinking about economic life has been formulated. In the light of it, the direction of Christian effort in relation to the economic order should henceforth be turned from charitable paternalism to the realization of more equal justice in the distribution of wealth. Moreover, Christians who live in the more prodigal geographical areas must recognize that the securing of economic plenty and greater justice in its distribution within their respective national groups is not the whole of their duty . . . they cannot escape some measure of responsibility for those areas where for years to come there will doubtless be desperate economic need.

In suggesting some of the implications of Christian doctrine for *standards for our economic life*, the Conference listed the following:

(1) Right fellowship between man and man being a condition of man's fellowship with God, every economic arrangement which frustrates or restricts it must be modified, and in particular such ordering of economic life as tends to divide the community into classes based upon differences of wealth and to occasion a sense of injustice among the poorer members of society. To every member of the community there must be made open a worthy means of livelihood. The possibilities of amassing private accumulations of wealth should be so limited that the scale of social values is not perverted by the fear and the envy, the insolence and the servility which tend to accompany extreme inequality.

(2) Regardless of race or class, every child and youth must have opportunities of education suitable for the full development of his particular capacities, and must be free from these adventitious handicaps in the matter of health and environment which our society loads

upon large numbers of children of the less privileged classes. In this connection, the protection of the family as a social unit should be an urgent concern of the community.

(3) Persons disabled from economic activity, whether by sickness, infirmity or age, should not be economically penalized on account of their disability, but on the contrary should be the object of particular care. Here again the safeguarding of the family is involved.

(4) Labor has intrinsic worth and dignity, as being designed by God for man's welfare. The duty and right of men to work should therefore alike be emphasized. In the industrial process labor should never be considered as a mere commodity. In their daily work men should be able to recognize and fulfill a Christian vocation. The working man, whether in field or factory, is entitled to a living wage, wholesome surroundings, and a recognized voice in the decisions which affect his welfare as a worker.

(5) The resources of the earth, such as the soil and mineral wealth, should be recognized as gifts of God to the whole human race, and used with due and balanced consideration for the needs of the present and future generations.

The implications of even one of these standards, seriously taken, will involve drastic changes in economic life. Each one of them must be made more definite in terms of the problems which face particular communities.

Christian groups, both of an official church character and of an unofficial character, in various countries, have followed up these principles laid down at the Oxford Conference with concrete proposals for the reconstruction of the economic life of their respective nations. Three samples from Great Britain are included here, because in spite of the pressing exigencies of war, Christian groups in that nation have gone far in their thinking on this question and have had a considerable influence on the thinking of Christian groups in other countries.

#### *A. Report of the Commission on Social and Economic Justice:*<sup>1</sup>

This statement confines itself to the rights and responsibilities which are most in need of reassertion in Britain, namely, those in the economic sphere. In what follows, the word "industry" is used in an inclusive way to cover every form of production, distribution and service, including agriculture.

##### *1. Charter for the Individual*

To enable every citizen to play a responsible part in the life of the community:

---

<sup>1</sup> "Towards a Christian Britain—Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction". A statement by the Commission of the Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility.

(i) Every man should have the opportunity of a decent house, a healthy childhood, and education suited to his abilities and a chance to develop and express his social and spiritual nature—in work, in leisure and in retirement—to a degree according with the wealth-producing capacity of his day.

(ii) Every man should be permanently entitled to a position in industry for which he is fitted.

(iii) No man should be dislodged from his place in industry by arbitrary dismissal, but only by orderly process.

(iv) No man should suffer arbitrary reduction in his standard of life or degradation of his standard of work.

(v) Every man should have an effective share in the determination of the policy of his industry.

Such rights as these should be accepted as basic rights, and both the community as a whole and industry in particular should be organized so as to honour them. They should be regarded as no less binding than honesty or solvency.

The recent scientific mastery of the problem of production has put the standards set forth above within reach, provided that their achievement is included among the primary objectives of industrial organization.

## 2. *Charter for Industry*

To enable industry to be directed toward the maximum service of the community rather than determined primarily by the index of financial profit for its several units:

(i) Industrial units should be assisted to realize the above standards by the development of appropriate forms of coordinated activity.

(ii) Every useful and efficient industrial unit should be safeguarded from vicious forms of competition.

(iii) Industry as a whole should have means for the orderly transfer of labour from one industry to another.

(iv) Each industry should be provided with means of estimating the current real need for its products, to help it to determine and maintain fair prices and fair conditions of labour.

(v) The nation's credit should be used, and its financial policy planned with the primary object of enabling industry to fulfill its functions of supplying human needs and direct labour to the greatest advantage of all concerned. (This reverses the present subordination of industry to finance.)

The question is not pre-judged whether in some cases the ownership and control of industry will have to be taken over by the nation. In some other cases an industry may be by law transformed into a Public Utility Trust; and in yet others a number of industries may voluntarily continue to fulfill the responsibilities thus imposed upon them, with such Government cooperation and direction as may be found necessary. British industry to a notable extent is dependent on its overseas outlets. The above principles should be regulative of it in both its home and foreign aspects, and they are fully consonant with proposals which follow for international trade.

### *3. Charter for World Economy*

To promote the welfare of the various communities which make up the world, it is incumbent on every nation to direct its industrial, commercial and financial policy along lines that will not threaten the well-being of other nations, whether by imperilling their economic development, reducing their standard of living, or imposing a problem of unemployment upon them, but rather will assist them to overcome their economic difficulties, and by such means open up the way to freer conditions of trade. To that end it is to be recognized that:

- (i) Every nation and community should be safeguarded against forms of trading which involve their economic exploitation.
- (ii) No nation or community should have its economy imperilled by the financial or political action of any other nation.
- (iii) The right of access to the raw materials of the world should be assured on equal terms to all nations and communities which duly respect the rights of others in their commercial and political activities.
- (iv) Poorer nations and communities should be assisted to develop a higher economic capacity and standard of living, by means which will not make them subject to exploitation by other communities.
- (v) International trade and finance should be guided by the above principles, and where necessary they should be controlled by an international authority.

B. In addition to these proposals of the non-Roman Churches in Great Britain, the agreement signed by the three leaders of the non-Roman Church, together with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hinsley, is a significant statement. It accepted the five points of Pope Pius XII with reference to the relations between nations\* and made five additional points dealing with the economic order:

1. Extreme inequality in wealth and possessions should be abolished.
2. Every child, regardless of race or class, should have equal opportunities of education, suitable for the development of his particular capacities.
3. The family as a social unit must be safeguarded.
4. The sense of a divine vocation must be restored to man's daily work.
5. The resources of the earth should be used as God's gift to the whole human race and used with due consideration to the needs of the present and future generations.

These principles, together with the five points of Pope Pius XII, were affirmed as essential to lasting peace.

C. The Roman Catholic Church in England has recently enunciated ten points as "minimum conditions for the Christian way of life":

---

\* See p. 77.

1. A living wage based on sufficiency for comfort and saving.
2. This should be the first charge on industry.
3. Determining factors are: an agreed standard of work, capacity of industry to pay, agreed minimum family average.
4. When the employer cannot pay the minimum wage, the difference should be made up by a wage percentage pool or by the state.
5. A wife should not have to work to insure a minimum living income.
6. No one should have to sleep in the living room. There should be satisfactory sanitation and a bathroom for each family. Slums should be abolished.
7. A ban on commerce in birth-prevention appliances.
8. A ban on obscene books.
9. Religious education meeting the wishes of parents, available for all school children.
10. The enormous inequality in distribution of wealth and control of lives of the masses by a comparatively few rich people is against the social order. There must be a renewal of the Christian spirit of brotherhood which the last few generations of scientific prosperity and "get rich quick" have gone far to kill.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### THE CHRISTIAN BASIS IN RELATION TO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

1. In the Christian view, what should be the purpose of economic activity, i.e. of producing and distributing goods and services?
2. What principles, by which proposals for economic reorganization may be judged, can be derived from the Christian doctrine of creation, with its concept of stewardship of the earth's resources?
3. What are the chief obstacles in your own nation to the realization of a standard of life for all sections of the population—agricultural as well as industrial—commensurate with the productive possibilities (raw materials, including agriculture, man-power, and technological development) in your nation?
4. Which are the most economically disadvantaged groups in your population? Are these those who suffer inequality of opportunity in the economic realm because of racial background? Do Christian groups follow the same practice in this respect as the rest of the community?
5. "The direction of Christian effort in relation to the economic order should henceforth be turned from charitable paternalism to a realization of more equal justice in the distribution of wealth". (Oxford Conference) What does this objective for Christian social action in the economic realm require of the Church; of lay Chris-

tian organizations; of Christian citizens? How much are Christian groups in your nation doing along this line, or do they leave such activity to secular movements while the activity of Christian groups is more related to "charitable paternalism?" What are the consequences for the Christian Church of leaving the effort to secure more equal justice to secular groups?

6. Discuss each of the standards for our economic life proposed by the Oxford Conference. What changes in the economic and social policy in your country would be required to realize each standard, with respect to agriculture, commerce, industry, the service trades, etc.? Would changes in economic philosophy be required? What changes in the economic relations between nations would be required?

7. What are the strengths and weaknesses (with reference to the economic order) of the five points made by the Roman and non-Roman Church leaders of Great Britain?

8. In what ways is the Roman Catholic statement of "Ten Points" which are "minimum to living the Christian life", more far-reaching than the statement made by the Commission of the Churches on Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction? In what ways is it weaker?

What fundamental changes in the social structure would be required if these programs really were to be put into practice?

9. What are the most important issues in the economic realm on which Christian groups in your nation should be working *now* to put into effect the standards set forth by the Oxford Conference? What is your group doing about it?

10. What do you think about the statement that "if political democracy is to survive, there must be developed instruments by which the people can control economic policy"? What instruments of this kind exist in your nation? What part does the labor movement play in securing a larger measure of economic democracy; the cooperative movement; the consumer movement?

## ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

The decisive rôle of both internal and international economic conflicts in creating open warfare between nations will be denied by no one who has followed the pattern of world events in the past two

decades. Unequal access to raw materials and markets, the desperate efforts of economic groups in one country to protect themselves against the consequences of industrialization in other countries, the struggle of certain nations for economic self-sufficiency, the foreign policy of nations dictated by the fact that their leaders feared communism more than they feared fascism, since their economic and class interests seemed more threatened by the former than the latter—all these, and many other aspects of the economic problem played their rôle in creating the chaos and suffering of global war.

The same bitter contradiction which characterized individual nations, like the United States, was apparent when the economic problem was viewed from the world standpoint. On the one hand, there were the majority of people in the world—in Europe and the Americas, as well as in Africa and Asia—whose standard of living was below the “decency” level, not to mention a “health and efficiency” standard. On the other hand, nations faced economic crisis because there was no market for their products, while coffee was burned, oranges dumped in the sea, wheat set to the torch, and silk and cotton destroyed.

Just as there can be no peace in a world of competing political sovereignties, each a law unto itself and seeking its own advantage, so there can be no peace in a world where economic nationalism is rife. The efforts to solve the political problems between nations through international cooperation and world organization will be constantly undermined by the economic conflict. Some form of world economic planning is essential to a peaceful world.

As we consider the *Christian* basis of the new society we must constantly raise the question about planning. Who is to do the planning? Whose interest is the planning to serve? To what end is the planning to be done or what motivating purpose is to be the basis on which decisions are made? The Christian conviction that the resources of the earth are the creation of God to be used in stewardship for the service of all people is the central fact, in the light of which we evaluate all proposals for economic organization.

There has been less public discussion of world economic organization than there has been of world political organization. This is partly due to the highly technical nature of the subject and because economic conflict is always less obvious to the public than is

political conflict. The layman will certainly not be able to participate in decisions about the more technical aspects of international economic relations, but that does not mean that the ordinary citizen should not have a voice in deciding the *objectives* of such planning, or whether or not there is to be such planning.

The objectives, and some indication as to possible method of world economic organization are suggested in a recent book by Dr. Lewis Lorwin, former Economics Adviser to the International Labor Organization, and now consultant to the National Resources Planning Board in the United States:<sup>2</sup>

The basic defect of the old system is that it cannot guarantee the continuous maximum utilization of human and material resources for social ends. The vaunted inner tendency of laissez-faire to maintain a smoothly moving equilibrium in the economic activities of nations and of the world, has been shattered by the dynamic quality of modern life. New and rapid technical changes, geographical shifts in the location of industry, changes in habits of consumption, in attitudes toward saving and investment, in the rate of population growth, in the economic power of different nations, in the nature and channels of world trade, are creating new and complex conditions of economic activity under which uncoordinated individual judgments and decisions are bound to fail. If nations and the world are to put an end to the chronic condition of unused resources, to unemployment, poverty ("idle machines, idle money, idle men") and to the resulting conflict between nations, a new economic method must be put to use. *That method consists in the application of forethought and of collective guidance, in organizing economic forces for definite social ends, and in using all resources for clearly planned improvements in the standards of living of all people.*\* . . . While such planning would limit the unsocial powers of some individuals and the monopolistic privileges of corporate bodies and would subordinate the making of profits to social ends, it would not eliminate individual or group initiative on a private basis. . . . World order and peaceful prosperity can be obtained, according to the planning groups, only at a certain price. That price is the acceptance of collective responsibility for maintaining civilized standards in world relations and the willingness of "overprivileged" nations, classes, and groups to share some of their privileges with the "underprivileged." If this spirit prevails, then the economic, social, and political principles of the new world system can be successful. The economic policy of the post-war order must break with laissez-faire completely, and must be based instead on the planning idea. Specifically what is necessary is to develop further the various international schemes for commodity control, the cartels and production agreements, in such a way as to make

---

<sup>2</sup> Lewis Lorwin, "Economic Consequences of the Second World War", Random House, 1941.

\* Italics ours.

them serve the interests of the people. . . . The world economy based on principles of planning could be organized internationally on the basis of mutual tolerance for different economic systems. What is necessary is agreement to practice "economic expansionism", that is, the maximum use of resources throughout the world with a view to raising standards of living. As such world planning develops, it may necessitate changes in economic mechanisms and institutions, but such changes can then be made gradually and on the basis of recognized economic needs and experience.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

1. Discuss the Christian doctrine of stewardship of the earth's resources for the benefit of all people, with reference to such international economic problems as: access to raw materials, the question of colonies, international monopolies, tariffs, etc.

2. Is it right or just that a few nations should own or control or exercise political domination over the greater part of the wealth of the world?

3. In what way does international economic discontent breed war? In what ways does fear of war encourage nations to attempt economic self-sufficiency?

4. What can be done by international agreement to improve living conditions, the standards of labor (both agricultural and industrial), the flow of trade?

What has been done in this regard by the International Labor Organization? Has your country ratified any I.L.O. Conventions? Which ones has it failed to ratify, and why?

5. Would the people of your nation be willing to share some of their economic "privileges" in order to raise the standard of living of people in other parts of the world?

To what extent would sacrifices be necessary if economic life were organized on an "expansionist basis" (full use of man power, raw materials, the land, machines, transportation facilities and capital) rather than on a scarcity basis as at present?

6. How important is the provision in the Atlantic Charter for the equal access of all nations to raw materials, in the effort to build a basis for peace between nations? What qualifications did the framers of the Atlantic Charter make on this provision? How

significant is the fact that this Charter has not been extended to include nations of the Orient?

7. What changes in the economic relations between nations would be required if the standards set forth in the Oxford Conference were to be made effective? What chances are there that such changes will occur under a fascist victory; under a United Nations victory?

8. What elements would be essential to a constructive planning on a world basis for the use of food and fibre to feed and clothe the peoples of the world? What consequences has the growing industrialization of agriculture—economic, cultural and political?

9. Discuss the nature and function of an international economic planning agency. Give reasons for and against world economic planning. What steps are already being taken in the field of international economic planning during the war?

## CHAPTER V

# The Christian Basis in Relation to World Organization

There are numerous proposals for the form which the international organization of the future should assume: a reorganized League of Nations, a Federal Union of Nations, a loose federation of strong regional groups, etc. Some of these suggestions have an almost apocalyptic character, envisaging a complete break with the past and a totally new order to be introduced when hostilities cease. Others are more characterized by a sense of historical continuity, building on past experience. As the war develops and the United Nations are forced to make more and more fundamental decisions involving social as well as military policy, certain features of post-war world organization are already being established. The Polish-Czechoslovak and the Greek-Yugoslav treaties are far-reaching in their consequences. The fact that China, Great Britain, Russia and the United States are united in the prosecution of the war, and that Russia and China have commanded the respect and admiration of the peoples of the world for their heroic efforts, will have no small influence on the character of the world organization which emerges from this war, if the United Nations are successful. *The purpose of this study outline is not to analyze the specific proposals which are being made, but rather to consider the Christian basis by which Christians, who may differ on specific proposals, may evaluate them in the light of their faith, and to examine the nature and importance of the contribution which Christianity can make.*

However much the informed and experienced international authorities may differ on specific proposals, they are unanimous in their agreement on two fundamental points: that there is no hope for world peace and successful international organization without an international ethos, and that national sovereignty must be limited. By an international ethos they mean a system of values, universally accepted, which can give unity of purpose and a common basis of

action to the nations of the world in their dealings with each other. It is a common spiritual foundation to which the nations are loyal, and in the light of which they condition their behavior. It is only when this is achieved that nations will be willing to limit their sovereignty. It is only such an ethos that can constitute an effective bulwark against international anarchy and disorder. Such a spiritual foundation existed for western nations in the Middle Ages when there was a genuine "Christendom". This common basis was lost at the beginning of the modern era with the separation of Church and state in many nations, the growth of nationalism and secularism, the philosophy of individualism, and the desire of the leading western nations to be unhampered in their freedom to exploit the new tools for prosperity and power which science had put into their hands. Now there are no new frontiers of the old type to conquer. We have to turn now, and learn to live with each other.

It is an enormously difficult problem. For it is not just the European nations involved, as in the Middle Ages, but the whole world. No longer are rulers or people motivated as they were in the Middle Ages, by the active fear of Hell and hope of Heaven, which was at least as powerful as the positive devotion to Christian values in creating an international ethos. No longer are rulers of people conditioned by a focus of values growing out of the fact that they consider this world a transient thing, a "vale of tears".

On the other hand, there are certain developments pointing to the possibility of achieving such an ethos. The missionary enterprise has taken the Christian Gospel to the whole world and its influence on the values and culture of non-western nations has been far in excess of the actual number of converts. The almost unbelievable progress of the oecumenical movement within the last decade is a factor of greatest importance in relation to this problem of an international ethos. The World Conferences of the Churches at Oxford and Edinburgh in 1937, the significant beginnings which have been made in the formation of a World Council of Churches, the Amsterdam Conference of 1939, the Madras Conference of the International Missionary Council, the work of the lay international Christian organizations such as the World's Y.W.C.A., World's Y.M.C.A. and World's Student Christian Federation—all these are more than conferences and organizations. There have been world meetings of geologists, doctors, physicists, etc., but the difference

between these and the Christian oecumenical conferences and organizations is that the latter represent a meeting of minds and a movement of spirit about the *faith* by which people of every race and nation can live.

Another positive factor which cannot be under-estimated is that the fascist regimes, with their denial of human values of freedom and justice, which have been too easily taken for granted, have again made articulate for millions of people the values by which nations must live. The millions of people in nazi occupied areas of Europe, people who were members of proud nations and the dominant white race, are now experiencing what the native peoples of Africa and Asia have known for years. Perhaps those of us who for centuries have been in dominant positions, and listened with so little imagination and understanding to the claims of those we chose to call "backward" peoples, may now, having suffered some of the same experience, be more ready to meet their cries for equal treatment. If we do not, the suffering will have been in vain.

### CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES

In July 1939, a group of men and women from various nations, including Germany, met in Geneva under the auspices of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches. They met on the eve of war in a time of deepest fear and uncertainty about the future. They met to define the moral principles derived from Christianity, which should govern the life of states and to suggest something of their application to concrete problems. The principles which they stated have been reinforced in the hearts of men by events of the past three years. The principles are stated in a memorandum<sup>1</sup> as follows:

We should hardly remain within the limits of Biblical promise if we expected that within this sinful world the nations of the earth could ever be a perfectly harmonious family of nations, entirely governed by the spirit of love. But we do believe that, even in the hard impersonal world of states, certain basic principles can and should be the standards of order and conduct. *Among these principles must be included (i) the equal dignity of all men, (ii) respect for human life, (iii) acknowledgement of the solidarity for good and evil of all nations and races of the earth, (iv) respect for the plighted word, and (v) the recognition*

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Churches and the International Crisis*—a memorandum prepared by an international conference of lay experts and oecumenical leaders, convened in July, 1939 by the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches.

*that power of any kind, political or economic, must be co-extensive with responsibility. . . .\**

While it is our Christian faith which urges us to adhere to these principles, they are of such a character that many who do not profess the Christian faith, but are equally bewildered by the openly proclaimed moral anarchy, will respond with cordial assent.

We do not forget that the Church can never be satisfied with urging such directions upon all its members. It has a greater message for the world, the word of redemption and eternal life. But this message will not be taken seriously if the Church does not earnestly impress upon its members the standards of political conduct which are derived from Christianity. We know that much thought has yet to be given to the clarification of these principles, but we make the endeavour to apply them now to some of the concrete problems with which the world is confronted at this time. . . .

1. *Political power should always be exercised with a full sense of responsibility.* All government involves the exercise of power, and there is therefore nothing unchristian or unethical about the nature of power in itself. But wherever there is power, there is the temptation to use it selfishly and carelessly, without due regard for the needs and interests of those who are affected by it. Such irresponsible use of power is definitely unchristian.

This temptation is particularly insidious in two fields of public affairs: in international relations, especially relations between a strong state and weaker peoples, because in this sphere there is no constitutional limitation upon the exercise of power; and in economic relations, where there is also often a great disparity between the strength of the parties concerned. International economic relations—where conditions often allow an easy abuse of power, and where control over raw materials, capital movements and access to markets may be very unequal—are a particularly dangerous field and call for the attention of Christians, both as citizens and participants in the modern economic system.

2. *All human beings are of equal worth in the eyes of God and should be treated so in the political sphere.* It follows that the ruling power should not deny essential rights to human beings on the ground of their race or class or religion or culture or any such distinguishing characteristic.

3. From these two principles there follows a third: *the duty of the ruling power to develop equality before the law, from what may be a passive and a merely formal equality, into a political system which carries with it positive rights and duties.* The function of the Christian ruler is so to use his responsibility as to render those, over whom his power extends, themselves more fully responsible, thereby adding to their human dignity and enabling them better to fulfill their social duties as men and Christians.

Such a system, when it is infused with a spirit of responsibility, affords the best conditions for the practical application of the Christian message of love and brotherhood to political life, both national and international.

---

\* Italics ours.

4. Certain principles also stand out, in the light of recent experience, in regard to the *political structure needed for the conduct of world affairs*. The chief of these is that *no true government can exist without law, and that no law can exist without an ethos—that is to say, a sense of obligation in the conscience of the members of the community.*

International law, incomplete as it is, is at present a body of rules without a common ethos such as it possessed at the time when it was confessedly based upon Christian principles. It is not now grounded upon a sense of obligation in the conscience of the members of the community. It is clearly the task of the Oecumenical Movement to strive for the fuller realization of the fact of international community within its own ranks, and by promoting amongst the citizens of the various states that sense of obligation which is essential if the world is to move forward from its present anarchy to something deserving the name of the Rule of Law. On this basis alone can institutions be securely established; and it is institutions that make the will of a community real and effective in the life of its members.

5. It must be made clear to the people of our respective states that if Christian principles of national conduct are to be made effective *there must be some form of international organization which will provide the machinery of conference and cooperation.* The experience of national life makes it clear that the mere affirmation of principles of conduct is not sufficient to put them into practical operation. Even if we could assume the best of good will between nations, it would still be necessary for them to have a common forum for the exchange of views and for the adjustment of conflicting claims. All the more is some form of organization needed, on the one hand to prevent isolated outbreaks of violence and on the other hand to bring to bear the public opinion of all nations in order to make effective the principle of justice between individual nations. It is for governments to determine what particular form these necessary institutions should take, but it can be suggested that it would seem wiser to improve and develop existing institutions, where possible, than to seek to establish new ones.

6. We do not feel called upon to put forward any opinions as to the details of the international political system which would be most appropriate in a world in which the rule of law was accepted in principle. For the present, international relations are carried on between independent states, and the same sense of social obligation that has been developed within national limits has not been extended to the relations of states. The immediate task in this field is to improve the ethos of inter-state relations—to bring influences to bear upon what has been left, by a long tradition, in a jungle outside the bounds of law, or morality, of courtesy and decent human feeling. International relations at least need not and must not be definitely anti-Christian. It is for Christians to strive for the acceptance by their governments of definite standards which will rule out the worst elements in the present relationships and lead to the raising of the level, so that rules of neighbourliness between states may be comparable to those obtaining between individuals.

Such neighbourliness would find its most natural and helpful expression in a willingness to consider the standpoint of other peoples and to

*meet the reasonable needs of a changing world.* At the same time we must recognize that the rule of law cannot become a reality so long as the way is known to be open for resort to violence. It is for the international community to remove this insecurity by providing *an effective deterrent against the use of force.* For this purpose it is not sufficient for nations to renounce the use of violence on their own part. They have also a duty as good neighbours to take their share of the responsibility for maintaining good order in the international community. The full discharge of this responsibility will require that the collective will of the community shall be used to secure the necessary changes in the interests of justice, to the same extent that it is used to secure the protection of nations against violence. As to the use of force in this connection we are not agreed.

7. In the field of economic relations we consider that it is both necessary and possible to place *international economic life* upon a more assured basis. The close association that now exists in most civilized countries between economic life and social policy has made the national economy a unit of which those concerned with international economic relations have in varying degrees to take account. It may be for example that countries which have developed certain forms of planned economy will not return to the old form of laissez-faire economies, which did not seem to them to solve their social problems. There is no good reason why relations between such planned economies should be un-neighbourly. . . .

We suggest that even though it is clearly impracticable to put international economic relations on a basis which will be in all respects mutually satisfactory among the various nations, consideration should at least be given to the position of others before decisions are taken, and a form of procedure should be adopted which takes into account the sensibilities of others and the psychological factors which are present. For the manner in which things are done is often as important as the things done.

8. We are impressed by the fact that difficulties are often allowed to become acute before they are dealt with. We suggest that by international agreement there might be brought into being some continuing international machinery charged with the duty of detecting international difficulties at their incipient stage and when the problem is still of such proportions that it could be more easily dealt with.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO WORLD ORGANIZATION

1. What were the causes of the breakdown of the peace settlement after the last war?

How far was the "League of Nations ideology" a mere facade which was used as a cover for the predominant "western" powers? How far did it represent a real conviction concerning the rule of law in international relations?

2. How have the political and economic policies of your nation, in the last twenty years, contributed to international anarchy? Which policies have contributed to the building of a stable world order?

3. What are the factors which contribute to the intensification of nationalism? When is nationalism a good thing, i.e. under what conditions does it contribute to a larger unity of peoples? When is it a bad thing?

4. What is national sovereignty? To what extent must national sovereignty be yielded to secure just and orderly relations between nations? "National sovereignty will never be yielded while the conditions which require national sovereignty exist." What are these conditions—political, economic, military, etc.?

5. What would be the advantages and disadvantages for your nation of participating in a system of world government?

6. Should or should not your nation promise to submit every threatening dispute, whatever its nature, to some international tribunal for settlement?

7. Would or would not a system of world government be a menace to popular liberties? In how far would nations within such a system be really free to express themselves? What conditions are essential if such a system is not to promote the possibility of the domination of the world by a few big powers?

8. What were the chief causes of the loss of an international ethos in the modern world? What groups besides the Christian forces are offering peoples of various races and nations a common foundation? How is an international ethos acquired:

By signing a treaty stating its principles? *or*

By world-wide promotion of the acceptance of these principles by public opinion? *or*

By securing statesmen devoted to these principles from every nation to comprise the leadership of the world organization? *or*

By limiting the world organization to those nations that will accept these principles? *or*

By creating the kind of economic and social relations which will create a real solidarity of the human race and of which the ethos would be a by-product?

9. To what extent has the Church pointed the way toward

an overcoming of the main conflicts between nations? To what extent had it become so bound up with the interests of dominant political and economic groups that it had adapted itself to the national policies of each country concerned? What has the Church done through the oecumenical movement to build a new sense of responsibility across national barriers?

10. Should the Church use its influence in the field of foreign policy or is that invading the function of the state? What part should Christian lay organizations like the Y.W.C.A., take in the shaping of the political and economic policies of their respective nations when these affect the peoples of other countries?

11. Discuss each of the five principles set forth by the Geneva Conference of 1939 (see pp. 66-67) in relation to the following questions:

- a. How consistent are the stated war aims of your nation with these principles? What changes or extension of these war aims would be essential to carry out these principles?
- b. In the light of these principles, how would the part given to the nations of the Orient and Africa, and to the Soviet Union, differ from the part they were given between 1919 and 1939? To what extent do these principles envisage a world organization which is inclusive of all nations and peoples on equal terms, as against a world organization based on the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon, or of "the democracies" or of any particular coalition of nations?
- c. What social, economic and political conditions are essential to the realization of these principles?

12. How essential is the defeat of fascism to the realization of a world order based on these five points?

13. In the light of the five principles stated by the Geneva Conference of 1939, evaluate the various proposals for world government: a universal, all-inclusive system; a Federal Union of Democracies; a reorganized League of Nations; an international order built on a loose federation of strong regional groups—Western Hemisphere, Europe, East Asia, etc.

14. Under what circumstances and for what purpose should force be used in international affairs? Is an international police force necessary to maintain the peace of the world? Would you

support the participation of your nation in the creation and maintenance of an international police force?

15. What "shape of things to come" may be gleaned from the Anglo-Russian, Polish-Russian, Polish-Czechoslovak and Greek-Yugoslav treaties; from the Atlantic Charter? What features of these agreements point to the possibility that the mistakes of 1919-1939 may be avoided?

16. Why is the inclusion of China and the Soviet Union in the United Nations important for the future of world peace? What obstacles to world peace in 1919-1939 would have been overcome had these nations had a respected place and a real voice in the League of Nations? What was the rôle of the Soviet Union in international efforts for peace prior to the war: in the Disarmament Conference; in the World Economic Conference; in the struggle to achieve a system of collective security against the spread of fascism? What was the reaction of the other great powers to the proposals of the Soviet Union; to China's plea for the protection of her territorial integrity in 1931?

17. The United States and the British Commonwealth of Nations may find themselves at the end of the war in the position of being "supply" countries for the materials and man-power needed for the reconstruction of the countries devastated by war. How can they avoid using this opportunity to dictate the political, economic and social policy of the peoples needing the food, clothing, machinery, capital, etc. which they can supply? What is essential if they are to avoid using this opportunity to secure their own political and commercial dominance? What part can Christians in these countries play to prevent this? How can the slogan of "freedom", which the Archbishop of Canterbury warns may be used to do this, be used to secure such dominance?

18. "The freedom of the nations is dependent upon a supernatural unity in which each nation actively participates, and which has the power to protect it against insecurity and conquest" (Paul Tillich). Discuss this statement. What conditions are necessary to its realization? What rights and what responsibilities does it entail?

19. What solutions are there for the problems of racial and nationality minorities? Will the principle of the "self-determination of nations" solve the problems in Europe? In the Orient? What

may we learn from the experience of the Soviet Union in solving racial conflicts and in combining many national groups without losing the cultural contribution of these groups? To what extent are racial and nationality minority conflicts due to the fact that these groups are frequently used as pawns for powerful economic, political and even religious interests?

20. What would be the outstanding elements of a peace settlement of such a character that all nations are equally interested in maintaining it?

21. How essential is it that the peace settlement be a "dynamic" one, i.e. that it make provision for changes, and for the elimination of injustices which may develop? Will the nations which wield the greatest influence and power be willing to accept such a settlement?

## SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS

### a. THE QUESTION OF COLONIES

One area of international problems that will constitute an acid test of the sincerity of the war aims of the United Nations which possess colonies, will be the policy and program which they adopt with respect to the colonial question. Demands for the "redistribution" of colonies by which peoples would be handed over from one power to another, have given way before the demand for a fundamentally different approach to the problem—an approach which would lead to the eventual liquidation of the whole colonial system.

The Oecumenical Conference which met in July 1939 also drafted a statement of principles with respect to this question:

To draw up the details of such a plan or of any plan and to advocate them is not the duty of the Churches; it falls to the statesmen to work out the best scheme. But it is the business of the Church to indicate the conditions which any scheme must fulfill if it is to meet with the approval of the Christian heart and mind. Such a scheme might be based upon the following principles, many of which are already accepted and acted upon in modern colonial and mandate administration:

1. that indigenous peoples must not be treated as pawns of international policy;

2. that the paramount aim of the governments concerned must be the moral, social and material welfare of the native population as well as native autonomy as comprehensive as the conditions of each territory allow, to the end that ultimately the population of the area may be able to assume responsibility for its own destiny;

3. that native institutions, and in particular the systems of land tenure, be used and developed;
4. that missionary work be freely allowed;
5. that the denial of essential rights upon the basis of race discrimination be recognized as inconsistent with the welfare of the governed peoples;
6. that militarization of native peoples be forbidden;
7. that political propaganda in colonial territories for foreign purposes be recognized as injurious to native society;
8. that the principle of economic equality be recognized, subject always to the paramount claims of native economic welfare;
9. that such a system be carried out under the effective supervision of an international body, whose members shall be independent of national control.

These are the minimum requirements of a disinterested government of native peoples, guaranteeing freedom and looking to autonomy. The implications of each requirement must be worked out by the governments concerned and ought to be the steady concern of the Christian Churches.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### THE QUESTION OF COLONIES

1. Analyze and discuss the "nine minimum requirements for a disinterested government of native peoples". What are the strengths and weaknesses of these requirements? How would they be regarded by colonial peoples?
  - a. What conditions—economic, political and social—must obtain if peoples of colonial territories are not to be treated as "pawns of international policy"?
  - b. Who is to decide the point at which conditions permit native autonomy? Who is to decide when the population of an area is able to assume responsibility for its own destiny? If native peoples are not to be armed (point 6), assuming that the free nations are armed, will they ever be able to "assume responsibility for their own destiny"?
  - c. What change in current practices would be entailed in point 5?
  - d. Under what circumstances would point 7 be a hindrance to the achievement of freedom and full self-government by colonial peoples? How would the tendency be avoided by which those in power always label as "foreign ideologies", the movements of workers and peasants to improve their conditions?

- e. Would point 8 involve a contradiction in practice? How would the paramount claims of native economic welfare and the equal access of all nations to the products and markets of colonial territories be adjusted? Is there any solution for the low living standards of colonial territories apart from industrialization? What conflict in interest with other industrialized nations would this involve? How can such conflicting interests be resolved so that the resources of the whole earth may be used to raise the standard of living of all peoples to a health and efficiency level?
  - f. What qualifications would be essential for those who are to be members of the international body to control colonial areas? What can be learned from the experience of the mandate system?
  - g. Do you believe these nine points would "guarantee freedom and look toward autonomy"? If so, how would they be implemented? If not, how would you change them or what new ones would you state?
2. Is the decline of British imperialist power one of the fortunate results of the war? Is some form of Anglo-Saxon control essential to a world peace? Has the contribution which the British Empire has made to cultural unity, education, civil administration, the extension of medicine, sanitation, etc., to colonial territories, had to depend upon economic exploitation and political domination?

#### b. THE PROBLEM OF THE DEFEATED NATIONS

There is a difference of opinion among Christians on the question of how defeated nations should be dealt with. Some Christians hold that if any distinctions are made between victor and vanquished, the seeds of a new war will be sown. They believe that the Christian doctrine of forgiveness and love of enemies must animate the peace settlement from the moment when hostilities cease.

Other Christians hold that nations are not motivated by love, and since the Kingdom of God will not be realized on the earth at the moment of victory, Christians must strive for an attitude and policy of "retributive justice" as against revenge. Those who hold this view believe that God does not allow wrong-doing to go unpunished, and that justice is an essential in the relative political sphere

of history if love is to be possible. One Christian leader in writing of this problem says:

Perhaps the greatest obstacle in the way of realization of a real new order will be the *spirit of bitterness and hatred* toward certain national groups for years after the war is over. The existence and continual intensification of this spirit makes the Archbishop of York's suggestion of a five-year interim between the cessation of hostilities and the conclusion of the ultimate peace, seem a counsel of deep political wisdom. The exercise of *retributive justice* will be essential in the immediate post-war period; but as soon as conditions allow, it should be succeeded by a more permanent period governed in the political as well as economic field by the more generous principle of *distributive justice*.

The way toward this most desirable of goals will be obstructed as long as statesmen and others in the democracies are given encouragement in their growing tendency to speak of vengeance as one of their main war aims, and to foment by propaganda the spirit of revenge in the occupied countries. It cannot be too strongly stated by Christian leaders everywhere, particularly in those countries where the Church has definite influence upon the powers that be, that the only worthy war aim of countries which profess to stand for everything good in Christian civilization in Europe is the aim of justice tempered by mercy. There is an enormous difference between *retributive justice* and vengeance, and all possible effort should be made to make this distinction understood and applied. If this is not done, the birth of any new order may recede to a distance beyond the horizons of peoples now living.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### THE PROBLEM OF THE DEFEATED NATIONS

1. Discuss the statement that "no distinction should be made between victor and vanquished" in the final peace settlement. Discuss the distinction between "retributive justice" and "vengeance". Discuss the proposal for a lapse of several years between the ending of hostilities and the making of a peace settlement. Are these three ideas mutually exclusive or are they related?
2. What action on the part of your nation at the end of hostilities do you believe would be most appropriate from the Christian point of view—if your nation is a victor nation—if your nation is vanquished?

## THE FIVE POINTS OF POPE PIUS XII

I. A fundamental postulate of any just and honourable peace is an assurance for all nations great or small, powerful or weak, of their right to life and independence. The will of one nation to live must never mean the sentence of death passed upon another. When this equality of rights has been destroyed, attacked or threatened, order demands that reparation shall be made, and the measure and extent of that reparation is determined not by the sword nor by the arbitrary decision of self-interest, but by the rules of justice and reciprocal equity.

II. The order thus established, if it is to continue undisturbed and ensure true peace, requires that the nations be delivered from the slavery imposed upon them by the race for armaments, and from the danger that material force, instead of serving to protect the right, may become an overbearing and tyrannical master. Any peaceful settlement which fails to give fundamental importance to a mutually agreed, organic and progressive disarmament, spiritual as well as material, or which neglects to ensure the effective and loyal implementing of such an agreement, will sooner or later show itself to be lacking in coherence and vitality.

III. The maxims of human wisdom require that in any reorganization of international life all parties should learn a lesson from the failures and deficiencies of the past. Hence in creating or reconstructing international institutions which have so high a mission and such difficult and grave responsibilities it is important to bear in mind the experience gained from the ineffectiveness or imperfections of previous institutions of the kind. Human frailty renders it difficult, not to say impossible, to foresee every contingency and guard against every danger at the moment in which treaties are signed; passion and bitter feeling are apt to be still rife. Hence in order that a peace may be honourably accepted and in order to avoid arbitrary breaches and unilateral interpretations of treaties, it is of the first importance to erect some juridical institution which shall guarantee the loyal and faithful fulfillment of the conditions agreed upon, and which shall, in case of recognized need, revise and correct them.

IV. If a better European settlement is to be reached there is one point in particular which should receive special attention: it is the real needs and the just demands of nations and populations, and of racial minorities. It may be that, in consequence of existing treaties incompatible with them, these demands are unable to establish a strictly legal right. Even so, they deserve to be examined in a friendly spirit with a view to meeting them by peaceful methods, and even, where it appears necessary, by means of an equitable and covenanted revision of the treaties themselves. If the balance between

nations is thus adjusted and the foundation of mutual confidence thus laid, many incentives to violent action will be removed.

V. But even the best and most detailed regulations will be imperfect and foredoomed to failure unless the peoples and those who govern them submit willingly to the influence of that spirit which alone can give life, authority and binding force to the dead letter of international agreements. They must develop that sense of deep and keen responsibility which measures and weighs human statutes according to the sacred and inviolable standards of the law of God; they must cultivate that hunger and thirst after justice which is proclaimed as a beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount and which supposes as its natural foundation the moral virtue of justice. They must be guided by that universal love which is the compendium and most general common ground also for those who have not the blessing of sharing the same faith with us.

# Suggested Readings

It is difficult to suggest books for an international study. The following are those which are basic and should be available in all countries in which this study outline will be used. Each national movement should insert a supplementary list of suitable books and pamphlets readily available in their own country.

## OXFORD CONFERENCE SERIES

THE OXFORD CONFERENCE (*Official Report*), J. H. Oldham

THE CHURCH AND ITS FUNCTION IN SOCIETY, J. H. Oldham and  
W. A. Visser 't Hooft

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE MODERN STATE, Nils Ehrenström

THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN, T. E. Jessop, R. L.  
Calhoun, N. N. Alexeiev, Emil Brunner, Pierre Maury,  
Austin Farrer, and W. M. Horton

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HISTORY, H. G. Wood, C. H. Dodd.  
Edwyn Bevan, Christopher Dawson, Eugene Lyman, Paul  
Tillich, H. Wendland

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE COMMON LIFE, Nils Ehren-  
ström, Martin Dibelius, William Temple, Reinhold Nie-  
buhr, W. Wiesner, H. H. Farmer, John Bennett

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY, Ernest Barker, Marc Boergner, S.  
Zankov, E. Aubrey, K. S. Latourette, Paul Douglass, M.  
Björkquist, Hans Lilje

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AND THE WORLD OF NATIONS, Lord  
Lothian, Sir Alfred Zimmern, O. Van der Cablentz, John  
Foster Dulles, V. A. Demant, W. Menn, Otto Piper, E. E.  
Raven.

CHRISTUS VICTOR—*The Report of the World Conference of  
Christian Youth, Amsterdam, 1939*

THE MADRAS SERIES—Based on the meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tamberam, Madras, India, 1938. The following are particularly relevant:

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE CHURCH

THE CHRISTIAN BASIS OF OUR SOCIAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION—*World's Y.W.C.A. Special Pamphlet Series No. 1, 1939*

THE CHURCHES AND THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS—  
*Report of the conference convened in 1939 by the World Council of Churches*



